

Walking to Magdalena:
Place and Person in Tohono O'odham Songs, Sticks, and Stories
by
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A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved October 2013 by the
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ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

December 2013

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines songs, sticks, and stories pertaining to Tohono O’odham pilgrimages to Magdalena, Sonora, Mexico, the home of their patron saint, Saint Francis. In the sense that Tohono O’odham travel to Magdalena in order to sustain their vital and long-standing relationship with their saint, these journeys may be understood as a Christian pilgrimages. However, insofar as one understands this indigenous practice as a Christian pilgrimage, it must also be noted that Tohono O’odham have made Christianity their own.

The findings show that Tohono O’odham have embedded, or emplaced, Christianity within their ancestral landscapes, and that they have done so in a variety of ways through songs, staffs, and stories. This work emphasizes connections between O’odham processes of producing places and persons. Songs associated with the journey to Magdalena, which contain both geographical and historical knowledge, foreground the significance of place and the movements of various persons at the places mentioned within them. The staffs of O’odham walkers, like other sticks, similarly contain both geographical and historical knowledge, evoking memories of past journeys in the present and the presence of Magdalena. Staffs are also spoken of and treated as persons, or at least as an extension of O’odham walkers. O’odham stories of good and bad walkers illustrate contested O’odham ideologies of socially sanctioned movements. Finally, this dissertation concludes by demonstrating some of the ways in which O’odham senses of their own history diverge from academic models of Tohono O’odham history and the history of Christianity in the Americas.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I gratefully thank all of my consultants who shared their lives with me, helping me to understand the importance of the walk to Magdalena in becoming O’odham and the O’odham ways of making places and people. In particular, I must thank the Lopez family for always having an open door for me. When the Tohono O’odham Nation’s legislative council passed a law allowing me to collect oral histories, several individuals expressed the ultimate value of this research project: the preservation and distribution of cultural knowledge of Tohono O’odham people for the benefit of future generations. I am grateful to the council, the Tohono O’odham Nation Cultural Center and Museum, and Tohono O’odham Community College for all of their support and knowledge. To be clear, though, neither the council nor any individual tribal member is responsible for my findings, and all errors of omission or interpretation are mine.

I must also recognize the invaluable mentorship from the faculty at Arizona State University, particularly Tod Swanson, Anne Feldhaus, Eddie Brown, and the late Kenneth Morrison. Arizona State’s programs that support graduate students were also of particular help in funding my presentations at multiple national and international conferences, where I benefited from productive conversation with colleagues such as Greg Johnson, Tisa Wenger, Jace Weaver, and Michael McNally. I would also like to thank the established scholars within O’odham studies for variously inviting me into their homes, discussing the prospects of my work, and sometimes corresponding with me at length: Don and Adelaide Bahr, Bernard Fontana, James Griffith, David Kozak, Dean Saxton, and Ofelia Zepeda.

The following Arizona State grants, fellowships, and employers have been vital to the success of this project: the Graduate College Dissertation Completion Fellowship, the Digital Humanities and Just Food Initiatives at the Institute for Humanities Research, the Graduate and Professional Student Association JumpStart Research Grant and Graduate Research Support Program, the Religious Studies Summer Doctoral Fellowship and the Richard E. Wentz Graduate Fellowship, Religious Studies and the School of Historical, Philosophical, and Religious Studies, and the American Indian Studies department. Other valued supporters are the Jacobs Research Fund Individual Grant through the Whatcom Museum and, of course, Hamilton College's generous Start Up Funds.

Finally, nothing can be accomplished without the help of key individuals such as the curator of the Labriola National American Indian Data Center, Joyce Martin, and the go-to experts in Religious Studies, Lee Quarrie and Roxane Barwick. Another expert at accomplishing pretty much anything is my wife, Meredith Moss, and my inspiring daughter Zoe, whose long naps in a baby carrier gave rise to productive afternoons perusing archives and who continues to encourage her dad to "Go write your books!"

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a sketch of the methodology used in this research, how O’odham language is represented, the context of the fieldwork, the amount of time spent with the Tohono O’odham, and how various contacts were made. It also provides a brief introduction to the O’odham people and their history, as well as a brief review of the anthropological literature on the O’odham. Finally, it provides a review of the literature on the O’odham categories of “narrative” and “song” that constitute the original primary data used in this study. Following the literature and using my own research data, findings show how O’odham pilgrimages to Magdalena are vital in the production of O’odham places and people.

The O’odham

To provide a brief sketch of who the O’odham are, one should first note that “O’odham” – a pluralization of “odham” through partial reduplication – means “people,” or “person” in the plural, in senses both more and less restricted than this English translation might initially suggest. Among those peoples whose indigenous language is mutually intelligible, that linguists have classified as Piman, of the Uto-Aztecan language family, “O’odham” is used perhaps primarily, though certainly not exclusively, in reference to themselves. Within this large linguistic group, there has been and continues to be variation between dialects. Socially, culturally, and historically, however, contemporary O’odham primarily distinguish between themselves as Akimel O’odham, Tohono O’odham, Hia Ced O’odham, and O’odham in Mexico. Those who today call themselves Akimel O’odham, or “river people,” more commonly known as Pima, were

previously known as “one villagers” because of their permanent settlements along the more-or-less perennial rivers of what is today Southern Arizona. Today, they primarily live on the Salt River, Gila River, and Ak Chin reservations and in surrounding urban areas, particularly Phoenix. Those who identify themselves today as Tohono O’odham, or “desert people,” or perhaps more commonly as “Papagos,” were previously known as “two villagers” because of their seasonal migration between their summer fields and their winter springs or wells. Today, they reside on four separate pieces of land that make up the Tohono O’odham Nation: the “main” reservation, which shares nearly 75 miles of the United States-Mexico international border, Florence Village, San Xavier and San Lucy. Like the Akimel O’odham, Tohono O’odham also live in nearby urban areas. The Hia Ced O’odham, or “Sand Papagos,” who today are struggling for state and federal recognition and a separate land base, were previously known as “no villagers” because of their nomadic existence in the considerably more arid regions to the south and west of other O’odham. Today, though, most Hia Ced O’odham live in Puerto Peñasco (Rocky Point, Sonora, Mexico) and the western Gu Vo district of the main Tohono O’odham reservation.¹ In addition to the Akimel O’odham, Tohono O’odham, and Hia Ced O’odham, disparate families and communities of O’odham in Mexico, sometimes called “Sonoran Papagos,” have for the most part have moved to the United States, either living on or in rural communities around what is today the Tohono O’odham Nation, or have intermarried and assimilated into other communities in Mexico.

¹ Bernard L. Fontana, “Pima and Papago: Introduction,” *Handbook of North American Indian, Volume 10: Southwest*, Alfonso Ortiz, ed. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1983), 125-136; Bernard L. Fontana, *Of Earth & Little Rain: The Papago Indians* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989 [1981]), 39-47; see also Robert A. Hackenberg, “Pima and Papago Ecological Adaptations,” *Handbook of North American Indian, Volume 10: Southwest*, Alfonso Ortiz, ed. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1983), 161-177.

Although this study may include Akimel O’odham, Hia Ced O’odham, and other O’odham in Mexico, this study is primarily, though not exclusively, concerned with the Tohono O’odham of southern Arizona and northern Sonora, Mexico. The mere fact that the United States-Mexico international border arbitrarily cuts Tohono O’odham land in two should also suggest that the Tohono O’odham Nation – originally known as Papago Tribe of Arizona – is not a political entity with divine sanction from time immemorial, but rather an invention of the United States federal government.²

A Brief Review of O’odham History

In the following review of O’odham history, I will focus on the religious aspects of this history as well as how the Magdalena pilgrimage relates to this history. Like most other indigenous peoples in the southwestern United States, historians usually break up O’odham history into four eras: prehistory, Spanish, Mexican, and American. The first era precedes the colonization of the region by people of European descent. This period is usually designated as “prehistory.” O’odham themselves have oral sources and material objects that they say date to these earlier times, but in spite of O’odham interest in these sources as legitimate forms of knowledge that provide direct access into their past, most academics are content to call this O’odham knowledge of their own history “myth.”³

² Fontana, *Of Earth & Little Rain*, 120.

³ In their work to conceive of these so-called oral traditions, or “myths” as “history” and denaturalize what normally gets to count as “history,” I am influenced by, and build upon, the work of the following scholars: Alfonso Ortiz, “Some Concerns Central to the Writing of ‘Indian’ History,” *Indian Historian* 10:1 (1977), 17-22; Kenneth M. Morrison, *The Solidarity of Kin: Ethnohistory, Religious Studies, and the Algonkian-French Religious Encounter* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002); David Delgado Shorter, *We Wil Dance Our Truth: Yaqui History in Yoeme Performances* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2009).

Limited to historical sources written in European languages, most professional historians and anthropologists writing O’odham history simply skip over this era and jump into the beginning of the Spanish presence in the region.⁴

For the O’odham, the Spanish period (1687-1821) began when Father Kino began his journeys through their lands in 1687. Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, sometimes called “The Apostle to the Pimas,” was a Tyrolese (in what is now Italy) Jesuit trained in Germany. Only seven years after the failure of Franciscan missions in nearby New Mexico with the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, Kino introduced Christianity to the O’odham, as well as wheat, horses, cattle, and other grains, food sources, livestock, goods, microbes, narratives, songs, and practices.⁵ Having brought cattle ranching to the O’odham, the Franciscan historian Kieran R. McCarty called Kino, “the cowboy missionary, a horseman par excellence.”⁶ From a historian’s perspective, then, Kino is ultimately, if not proximally, responsible for the ongoing importance of Christianity, cowboy-culture, and horsemanship, as well as the predominance of the wheat-flour tortilla over the traditional central-Mexican corn tortilla among contemporary O’odham. Kino founded missions in the permanent villages among the “two villagers,” whom most contemporary ethnologists

⁴ Edward H. Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico, and the United States on the Indians of the Southwest, 1533-1960* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1970 [1962]); Henry F. Dobyns, *The Papago People* (Phoenix: Indian Tribal Series, 1972); Fontana, *Of Earth and Little Rain*; and Winston P. Erickson, *Sharing the Desert: The Tohono O’odham in History* (Tucson and London: The University of Arizona Press, 1994).

⁵ For seventeenth-century New Mexico and the revolt of 1680, see Seth Schermerhorn, “Christianity, Kachinas, Crosses, and Kivas: Religion, Resistance, and Revolt in Seventeenth Century New Mexico,” *Next: The Graduate Student Journal for the Academic Study of Religion* (1) 2007; For Kino’s impact on the O’odham, see Thomas Sheridan, “Kino’s Unforeseen Legacy: The Material Consequences of Missionization among the Northern Piman Indians of Arizona and Sonora,” *The Smoke Signal* 49-50 (1988), 155-167.

⁶ Kieran R., McCarty, “Jesuits and Franciscans,” *The Pimería Alta: Missions and More*, James E. Officer, Mardith Scheutz-Miller, Bernard L. Fontana, eds., (Tucson: The Southwestern Mission Research Center, 1996), 36.

call the Tohono O’odham, whether in what is today Mexico, where all of Kino’s missions were founded, or in the United States, where he traveled but never founded any missions. The only exception to Kino’s pattern of planting missions at the permanent winter villages of O’odham instead of their temporary summer, or field, villages, is at Caborca, where the mission stands too close to the Río Concepción, which continually erodes the church’s foundation. Crucially, however, Kino never established any missions north of what is today the United States – Mexico international border, or, therefore, in what is now the Tohono O’odham Nation.

However, the mere fact that most O’odham today are Christians cannot be attributed to the success of Kino’s missions. In fact, Kino’s missions experienced many significant conflicts, both before and after his death in 1711. For example, the first O’odham revolt in took place in 1695, only eight years after Father Kino’s arrival. On March 29, 1695, O’odham in Tubutama rose up, killing eight at the mission, including the Jesuit priests their Opata Indian servants, and burning all the buildings in Tubutama, Caborca, Imuris, San Ignacio, and Magdalena. Only built four years earlier in 1691, the mission church at Tubutama was likely destroyed during the revolt of 1695.⁷ In retribution for their actions, forty-eight O’odham were slaughtered by the Spanish military. As a side note, the Tohono O’odham organizers of the walk that I have been making are all aware of this revolt; yet, despite having hard feelings about the revolt and its gruesome aftermath, this is the town where we begin actually walking to Magdalena, about sixty kilometers away.

⁷ Mardith Schuetz-Miller and Bernard L. Fontana, “Mission Churches of Northern Sonora,” *The Pimería Alta: Missions and More*, James E. Officer, Mardith Scheutz-Miller, Bernard L. Fontana, eds., (Tucson: The Southwestern Mission Research Center, 1996), 67.

In 1711, Kino dedicated the church known today as the Church of Santa María Magdalena – or more simply as Magdalena de Kino – to St. Francis Xavier, who was his patron saint and namesake, the patron saint of missionaries, and also the patron saint of his Jesuit order.⁸ Dying shortly after the dedication, *Padre Kino* was buried at the church in Magdalena, where his bones were uncovered by archaeologists in 1966 and remain on public display to this day.⁹

After Kino's death, his missions continued to struggle with occasional uprisings. In 1751, the second O'odham revolt took place at the village of Sáric, only a few miles north of Tubutama, the place where the first revolt began fifty-six years before. Luís Oacpicagigua started the revolt by killing eighteen Spaniards whom he had invited to his house. From there, the revolt spread to Sonoyta and Caborca, where Jesuit priests were killed in each. In all, Luís and his allies killed over one-hundred O'odham and non-O'odham agents of the Jesuit missions, and most mission stations were temporarily abandoned. Spaniards mostly ignored the westernmost O'odham and the mission at Sonoyta was never again rebuilt after its destruction in 1751.

Uprisings continued at missions throughout the eighteenth century. In 1776, the O'odham revolted again. The Franciscan missionary Father Pedro Font dramatically described an O'odham, Apache, and Seri attack on the mission and village of Magdalena in November of 1776. In his account of the attack on the mission at Magdalena, Font noted, among other things, that the Indians took “a lovely image of San Francisco

⁸ For more on the life of Eusebio Francisco Kino, see Herbert Eugene Bolton's classic, *Rim of Christendom: A Biography of Eusebio Francisco Kino, Pacific Coast Pioneer* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1984 [1936]).

⁹ Joseph, Spicer, and Chesky, *The Desert People*, 85-86; Griffith, *Beliefs and Holy Places*, 36; Fontana, *Of Earth & Little Rain*, 103.

Xavier,” threw it down on the ground, and broke its arm.¹⁰ As another side note, it is worth noting that while contemporary ethnographers may observe affectionate interaction between O’odham and Saint Francis in Magdalena today, in the past, O’odham have clearly had other ways of relating with Saint Francis as well.

Following the expulsion of the Jesuits from all of New Spain by edict of the Spanish King Charles III in 1767, and the subsequent takeover by Franciscans, the date of the pilgrimage to Magdalena and feasts in honor of *San Flansisko* likely changed from Saint Francis Xavier’s feast day on the third day of December to Saint Francis of Assisi’s feast day on the fourth day of October.¹¹ However, San Xavier del Bac continues to celebrate on St. Francis Xavier’s feast day.

Kino visited the O’odham village of *Wa:k*, transformed into Spanish as Bac, in 1692. Kino began to build a church there in 1700, but it never got beyond the foundations and the present mission, which attracts thousand of tourists each year, was not completed until more than a century later. Many in San Xavier, like Mary Narcho, maintain – or at least tell the story – that their mission, and not the one at Magdalena, was supposed to have Saint Francis. As Mary Narcho, who is on the Saint Francis feast committee at San Xavier explained, the pilgrimage to Magdalena is not the result of Father Kino’s intention, but Saint Francis’s agency:

Father Kino told the O’odham people when he started building this mission here [in San Xavier de Bac] that he was going to go to Mexico and bring them a full sized saint of their patron saint [Saint Francis Xavier]. He would bring it to them, back to them.... He got as far as

¹⁰ Pedro Font, “Letters of Friar Pedro Font, 1776-1777,” Dan S. Matson, trans., *Ethnohistory* 22:3 (1975): 263-293.

¹¹ Griffith, *Beliefs and Holy Places*, 38.

Magdalena, where he died. That's here he's buried. He never made it here, so that's why people make that pilgrimage to Magdalena because that's as far as Father Kino got. And that's where that statue that he was bringing laid, and I guess that's why people started going there.¹²

Moreover, in spite of Saint Francis undermining Kino's intention by lying down in Magdalena instead of San Xavier, Mary Narcho, who has also cared for Saint Francis extensively by washing his body and changing his clothes and so on, suggested that *Saint Francis himself*, who is usually lying down, later got up and *walked* from Magdalena to San Xavier:

I don't know if it's true or not that this [Saint Francis at San Xavier] is the real one that they have here, because he has no legs anymore. They just made him artificial legs and he's very old and falling apart and we tied him together all over the place. But he's just really just half of a statue and we just tie him up. He's got artificial legs and feet and everything. I don't know if it's true that this is the real one, but they say that they've got a new one over there [in Magdalena].¹³

Stories such as these are common throughout the region as well as throughout Christendom in general.

In the Mexican period (1821-1848), O'odham may not have known that Mexico had gained its independence from Spain. Although this period saw increased secularization throughout Mexico, the Franciscans were largely able to avoid attempts at secularization on the northwestern periphery of Mexico. Nonetheless, the Franciscans ultimately relinquished their hold on churches in O'odham territories.

The beginning of the American period (1848-present), like the Mexican period before it, did not immediately lead to changes that were immediately noticeable in the

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everyday lives of most O’odham. In 1854, the Gadsden Purchase officially split Tohono O’odham lands in half; however, most Tohono O’odham continued to live as though the boundary did not exist for many years. Having largely passed without notice, many O’odham were not aware of no longer being “Mexicans” and having officially become “Americans.” A linguistic artifact of this history is that the O’odham word *Milga:n*, which is used exclusively to refer to Anglos – and not O’odham, despite their status as citizens of the United States of America – is derived from the Spanish *Americano*, transformed into O’odham by syllable reduction, with a flap [ɾ] (spelled with <l>) replacing the trill [r]. The United States did not officially extend federal Indian policy to O’odham territory until 1857, when the first Indian agent was sent to their lands. Franciscans soon followed, when in 1859 the Catholic Church at Santa Fe sent a French priest to visit San Xavier del Bac to renew ties between O’odham and the Catholic Church in the United States.

In 1871, the same year that the Gila River was dammed and the Akimel O’odham lost the water that their way of life depended upon, the Presbyterian missionary Charles H. Cook arrived among the Akimel O’odham on the northern reaches of O’odham territory. Anna Moore Shaw, an Akimel O’odham woman born on the Gila River Reservation in 1898 and the first American Indian woman in Arizona to graduate from high school, recounts how Presbyterianism came to her people in her autobiography and family history:

In 1870 a kind and gentle man named Charles H. Cook arrived to live among the Pimas. This *mil-gahn* [*milga:n*] (white man) was different from anyone the River People had ever known. He told them of the Gospel

message, but he was different from the Spanish missionary priests of long ago. He called himself a Presbyterian.¹⁴

Although it was twelve years before the Cooks converted any Akimel O’odham, when they finally did, “Chief” Antonio Azul was among them. After the first Akimel O’odham were baptized by Cook, according to Shaw, Presbyterianism “spread like wildfire.”¹⁵ As a result of these efforts, Ezell reports that, “Pima religious culture took on a strong flavor of Presbyterian Christianity.”¹⁶

Systematic Protestant missions to the Tohono O’odham started in 1910, when a Presbyterian missionary began to make regular trips to the reservation. Presbyterians soon established a church and school at Indian Oasis, now called Sells, the present capital of the Tohono O’odham Nation. By 1914, Presbyterians built a church and school at San Miguel and by 1920, churches were built in Vamori and Topawa. In their 1949 study, Alice Joseph, Rosamond Spicer, and Jane Chesky reported that the southern and eastern districts of what is today called the Tohono O’odham Nation had the most significant Presbyterian influence.¹⁷ They also reported that “there were no Presbyterians west of Gu Achi [Santa Rosa], and no missionary work had been attempted in the western districts.”¹⁸ These Presbyterian churches are significant in part because they are largely O’odham missions to O’odham with flourishing translations of the Bible, hymns, prayers,

¹⁴ Anna Moore Shaw, *A Pima Past* (Tucson and London: The University of Arizona Press, 1994 [1974]), 91.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 92.

¹⁶ Paul H. Ezell, “History of the Pima,” *Handbook of North American Indian, Volume 10: Southwest*, Alfonso Ortiz, ed. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1983), 158.

¹⁷ Joseph, Spicer, and Chesky, *The Desert People*, 25.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 92.

and so forth. When I spoke to the longtime missionary-linguist Dean Saxton at the 2012 San Juan feast in Santa Rosa, he assured me that these translators were “the real O’odham theologians.”¹⁹ O’odham Presbyterians also organize an annual camp meeting in Sells, which Simon Lopez suggested is their equivalent of the Magdalena fiesta for O’odham Catholics.

Indeed, as the growth of Presbyterianism among the O’odham has already begun to show, there were many religious influences among the Tohono O’odham beginning in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1891, two Mormons were reported to be residing at Gunsight, on the westernmost reaches of the Tohono O’odham Nation. By 1900, Mormons were reported in Topawa as well. Then, in 1906, the “Prophet Dowie,” a Protestant evangelist preaching in Phoenix sent an African American preacher and faith healer to the southeastern Tohono O’odham villages. For a while, the Tohono O’odham in Topawa and neighboring villages, as well as Tuscon, were influenced. One group of families from San Miguel allegedly began to prepare themselves for the end of the world, taking their families and cattle to the Comobabi Mountains where they awaited the end, disbanding a few months later and returning to San Miguel.²⁰

Catholic missionary work was renewed among the O’odham in 1908, though visits were seldom made to the westernmost districts of what became the Tohono O’odham Nation. In 1912, Father Bonaventure Oblasser began living among the Tohono O’odham, in part to limit the influence of Presbyterianism among them. These being the

¹⁹ Personal communication.

²⁰ Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest*, 139-140; Jack O. Waddell, “Mesquite and Mountains with Money and Messiah: A Papago Indian Case of Cultural Revitalization,” *Journal of the Steward Anthropological Society* 2:1 (1970), 51-88.

first American priests that the O’odham had ever seen, and perhaps even the first Franciscans for some O’odham, various scholars have noted that many O’odham did not recognize these Catholic priests as such.²¹ When I asked Simon Lopez if his parents or grandparents talked about what these early years when the Franciscans started coming were like, he explained that his great-great-grandmother “used to *hate* these Franciscan Fathers” and that they would all hide when they saw Franciscans coming in a Model T Ford.

SL: And they would *hate* them, *seeing them*, because *they haven’t known* exactly know what they’re here for. And the only thing they know is Saint Francis, you know, what they went through with the pilgrimage to Magdalena. And so they *thought* that [is] what Saint Francis is *about*, you know, in Magdalena where they’re taught. They *think* that it’s different from Franciscan Fathers and things like that.²²

And yet, while Simon added that he now thinks that the Franciscans and the Saint Francis are the same, it is understandable that previous generations may have felt differently. Indeed, American Franciscans did not recognize either the Tohono O’odham or the Magdalena fiesta as shining examples of Christian orthodoxy.

Both before and after the Franciscans came to the Tohono O’odham, there flourished among them a largely self-directed, priest-less Catholicism often referred to in English as “Sonoran Catholicism.” From the perspective of some Franciscans, the problem between Franciscans and Tohono O’odham is not that Tohono O’odham are not Christian, but rather that they are the wrong kind of Christian. Tohono O’odham were largely neglected by both Jesuits and Franciscans between the time of Padre Kino and the

²¹ Joseph, Spicer, and Chesky, *The Desert People*; Fontana, *Of Earth and Little Rain*; Griffith, *Beliefs and Holy Places*.

²² sl_3.2

early twentieth century when two Franciscan fathers, Tiburtus Wand and Bonaventure Oblasser, came to convert the Tohono O’odham.²³ But before these missionaries came to the Tohono O’odham, the Saint way, or *sa:nto himdag*, had already been incorporated into *O’odham himdag*, or the way of the People. Dobyns also contends that the Yaquis, or Yoeme, who had already indigenized Catholicism for themselves, were principal purveyors of “folk Catholicism” to other indigenous populations of Sonora, including the Tohono O’odham.²⁴ David Lopez, the recently deceased Tohono O’odham farmer, cowboy, ritual practitioner, and well-known collaborator with three generations of anthropologists from Ruth Underhill to Donald Bahr and David Kozak, corroborates the Yoeme sources of contemporary Tohono O’odham Catholicism, or *sa:nto himdag*, with his own family history:

I want to tell you how I have a little Yaqui blood in myself. This story also tells how we, the Papago people, got *sa:nto himdag*, our saint religion... Well, and they say that my late great-grandma, my grandpa’s mom, is the one that brought the rosary praying to the Papago, it was what she learned how to do from the Yaqui when she lived with the Yaquis. They built a little church over there at Covered Wells [Quijotoa] and put *sasantos* [saints] in there, and they prayed and had ceremonials like San Juan because my late grandpa Lopez was named Juan... So this is why I have a little Yaqui blood in me, I’m part Yaqui. And this is where our saint religion comes from.²⁵

²³ Griffith, *Beliefs and Holy Places*, 70; Bonaventure Oblasser’s papers are housed in the Labriola Center’s archives at the Arizona State University Library in Tempe, Arizona.

²⁴ Henry F. Dobyns, “Do-It-Yourself Religion: The Diffusion of Folk Catholicism on Mexico’s Northern Frontier 1821-46,” *Pilgrimage in Latin America*, N. Ross Crumrine and Alan Morinis, eds., (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 63-64; for discussions of Yoeme Christianity see Shorter, *We Will Dance Our Truth*; as well as Muriel Thayer Painter, *With Good Heart: Yaqui Beliefs and Ceremonies in Pascua Village*, Edward H. Spicer and Wilma Kaemlein, eds. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1986).

²⁵ David L. Kozak and David I. Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs: Tohono O’odham Poetics* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999), 77-78.

Like David Lopez's great-grandmother, who imported the trappings of Sonoran Catholicism when she came to Covered Wells from farther south in Mexico, much of the practices that encompass *sa:nto himdag* amount to bringing Magdalena – with its saints, candles, ribbons, holy water, songs, and prayers – to Tohono O'odham villages (see chapter three). While Magdalena might have mass, hymns and prayers in Latin, confession, baptism, marriage ceremonies, and last rites, the "Sonoran" style chapels throughout Tohono O'odham territory had none of these things. Instead, children were baptized by godparents and people buried their own dead. Songs and prayers were mostly in Spanish. Though today prayers and hymns may also be in O'odham or English, some older women in Tohono O'odham villages still sing the Spanish hymns. As Henry Dobyns explained, "Older women who made the tiring pilgrimage to Magdalena for the festival of St. Francis on October 4 carefully memorized the Spanish words and music for the rosary, so they could sing and chant for their own people at home."²⁶ However, as Pretina Stabolepszy has noted, most O'odham singing these Spanish songs do not understand the words in songs they sing.²⁷ Adelaide Bahr's unpublished study on these Spanish hymns contributes additional evidence in the support of this contention.²⁸ As Adelaide Bahr found in her study, different villages sing different versions of these songs with different words in each. However, rather than phonemically transforming the Spanish words into a more O'odham-friendly phonology, most of the words that have been transformed into what O'odham imagine to *sound* Spanish, even when these sounds

²⁶ Dobyns, *The Papago People*, 38.

²⁷ Pretina Kathleen Stabolepszy, *Laughing Softly: O'odham Song Ritual as Orientation to the World* (Boulder, Colo.: University of Colorado Department of Religious Studies M.A. Thesis, 1988), 38-39, 61.

²⁸ Adelaide Bahr, "The Spanish Songs of Papago Indians." Unpublished manuscript, 1980.

no longer constitute words that are recognizably Spanish. In short, these hymns preserve what linguist Jane Hill might call “mock Spanish.”²⁹ But this O’odham “mock Spanish” is not meant to insult the saints, who are the primary audience of these songs; rather, the songs are made to *sound* Spanish because O’odham know that their saints – though not necessarily the O’odham themselves attending the saints’ fiestas – like to hear these songs in Spanish.

Not in spite of, but rather because of, developments such as these making Tohono O’odham relatively self-sufficient Catholics who could minister to themselves so long as they could continue making journeys to Magdalena, when the Franciscan missionaries came to the Tohono O’odham in the early twentieth century, tensions erupted among both Franciscans and O’odham, with each party convinced that they were the “real Catholics.”³⁰ Surely, we should not dismiss O’odham claims regarding the authenticity of their Christianity: one need not be a Franciscan in order to be a Christian. In the 1940s at least, according to Joseph, Spicer, and Chesky, the westernmost Tohono O’odham – who are perhaps disproportionately Hia Ced O’odham, or previously strictly nomadic “no-villagers” also known as “Sand Papagos” – were the most thoroughly “Sonora Catholic” and anti-Franciscan of any O’odham.³¹ Among these peoples living in the most arid O’odham territory, there had never been a strong missionary presence.

Between the 1920s and the 1940s, some Franciscans actively worked to suppress O’odham pilgrimages to Magdalena. During this period, some Franciscans discouraged

²⁹ Jane H. Hill, *The Everyday Language of White Racism* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 119-157.

³⁰ Griffith, *Beliefs and Holy Places*, 87.

³¹ Joseph, Spicer, and Chesky, *The Desert People*, 89.

the annual pilgrimage to Magdalena as part of their larger attempt to remake these so-called “Sonora Catholics” into good Roman Catholics who go to Mass, are married in the church, know some Latin songs and prayers, and have their children baptized by priests instead of godparents. No O’odham whom I spoke with during the course of this project had any memory of having heard anything like this before. Moreover, I sensed that it was almost unbelievable to imagine Franciscans opposing O’odham journeys to Magdalena. Griffith relates an oral tradition among Franciscan Friars at San Xavier del Bac, in which Father Tiburtius Wand converted a damaged statue of Christ into the present San Francis Xavier at *Wa:k*, in order to motivate O’odham to stay at home instead of taking up to one month every year to travel to Magdalena, and in his view do little more than get drunk and lose money.³² If this Franciscan tradition is true, then this Saint Francis at San Xavier del Bac is the same Saint Francis that Mary Narcho posited as the “real” Saint Francis earlier, with its legs worn off by walking from Magdalena to *Wa:k*. However, according to Griffith, the statue seen in Magdalena today is a replacement from the 1940s, after the original Saint Francis was burned in the furnaces of the *Cervecería Sonora*, the Sonora Brewery, on orders of the anti-clerical Sonoran state government in 1934. But O’odham tell other stories than this one. Joe Joaquin, a Cultural Preservation Officer for the Tohono O’odham Nation, insists on a different story:

During the persecution in Mexico, they [O’odham] were trying to bring the Saint across. But they couldn’t do it, so they put him in a cave up there somewhere. So years later, somebody found him, brought it down to where it is today [in Magdalena]. But it was really the O’odham’s, *O’odham’s Saint*, or *belonged to the O’odham*. And since it couldn’t come

³² Griffith, *Beliefs and Holy Places*, 47.

across, that's why they started going over *there* [to Magdalena], to pay tribute to the Saint. So it's still going on today.³³

A few Franciscans in the United States and anti-clerical revolutionaries in Mexico were not the only forces that opposed O'odham journeys to Magdalena at this time.

During the dourine and hoof-and-mouth disease quarantines of the 1930s, taking place at the same time as the Bureau of Indian Affairs's stock-reduction program, ethnobiologist

Gary Paul Nabhan noted:

Fearing that the intermixing of livestock from both sides of the border would further endanger the American cattle industry, U.S. officials forbade the Arizona O'odham from riding down to the ocean on their salt pilgrimage, to Magdalena on the pilgrimage for their Saint Francis, or to Stoa Doag to gather cactus fruit for summer ceremonies. Then they rounded up five hundred horses and cows, shooting, burning, and burying them near the village of Komelik. Several hundred more were massacred on the other side at Pozo Verde.³⁴

Although the O'odham were granted "religious freedom" in 1933, marking the end of the persecution of O'odham summer rain ceremonies, in 1943 a severe drought struck the O'odham. Some O'odham medicine men attributed the drought to the killing of horses in the dourine epidemic. For those inclined toward this interpretation, the official prohibition of the annual salt pilgrimage and Magdalena pilgrimage, due to the dourine and hoof-and-mouth epidemics, brought about a general decrease in rainfall.

Capital penetration and the cash economy also interfered with O'odham journeys to Magdalena. Many O'odham worked in cotton fields through much of the twentieth

³³ jj_1.1

³⁴ Gary Paul Nabhan, *Desert Legends: Re-Storying the Sonoran Borderlands* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994), 21.

century.³⁵ Cotton growers normally enjoyed employing O’odham as cotton-pickers, but every year around the end of September and the beginning of October, these O’odham cotton workers frequently abandoned the cotton fields in order to travel to Magdalena. Clearly, for many O’odham, the pilgrimage to Magdalena took priority over personal financial gain as well as national patriotism. “Faced with Papago intransigence,” Dobyms writes, “most growers quickly decided to haul their Indian pilgrims to Magdalena in trucks rather than let them spend time making the trek in slow horse-drawn wagons. Thus began a shift from wagon trails to highways, from wagons to trucks, pickups and buses for pilgrimage.”³⁶

Indeed, contemporary O’odham continue to encounter obstacles and resistance against traveling to Magdalena. In particular, as the border zone has become increasingly militarized in the wake of 9/11, border patrol, federales, and cartels regularly obstruct O’odham movement to and from Magdalena. Nonetheless, many O’odham, particularly elders, insist on going to Magdalena even, from a bio-medical perspective, at great risk to their health. For example, the Archie Hendricks, Sr. Skilled Nursing Facility in Sells works to facilitate and expedite, rather than discourage, the Magdalena pilgrimage based on the concern that if the facility’s staff prohibit elders from going, they may go on their own against medical advice. Instead the staff works with the elder’s family in order to make the trip as safe and swift as possible.³⁷

³⁵ Henry F. Dobyms, *Papagos in the Cotton Fields*, (self-published), 1950.

³⁶ Dobyms, *The Papago People*, 67.

³⁷ Scott Kukar, Delitha Livingston, Laurel Mallett, and Veronica Nieto, “Spiritual Norms and Other Cultural Considerations for Tohono O’odham Elders (information received from person communication),” School of Social Work, College of Public Programs, Arizona State University. No date given. Accessed at:

A Brief Review of the Anthropological Literature on the O'odham

The anthropological literature on the O'odham can be divided into works focusing on the major areas of language, ethnography, history, narratives, song. Of course, this review is by no means exhaustive.

For the O'odham language, there are two grammars and two dictionaries. The first grammar is Kenneth Hale's unpublished doctoral dissertation and the second is Ofelia Zepeda's published grammar, based on her doctoral dissertation.³⁸ Both grammars use the Alvarez-Hale orthography.³⁹ Each of the dictionaries, however, has its own orthography, both of which were developed prior to the Alvarez-Hale method. Madeleine Mathiot compiled a massive and now out-of-print dictionary using her own orthography that she developed.⁴⁰ She also authored a cognitive study of the O'odham language and another work on O'odham noun classes and folk taxonomy.⁴¹ Dean and Lucille Saxton also developed their own orthography and compiled their own dictionary, later reissuing a second edition with the collaboration of Susie Enos.⁴² There have been many other

http://clas.uiowa.edu/socialwork/files/socialwork/NursingHomeResource/documents/SpiritualNormsforTohono_personalinterview_NativeAmericans_Supp2.pdf

³⁸ Kenneth Hale, *A Papago Grammar*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. Bloomington: Indiana University, 1959; Ofelia Zepeda, *A Papago Grammar* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1994 [1983]).

³⁹ Albert Alvarez and Kenneth Hale, "Toward a Manual of Papago Grammar: Some Phonological Terms," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 36:2 (1970), 83-97.

⁴⁰ Madeleine Mathiot, *A Dictionary of Papago Usage*, 2 Volumes (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973).

⁴¹ Madeleine Mathiot, *An Approach to the Cognitive Study of Language* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968); Madeleine Mathiot, "Noun Classes and Folk Taxonomy in Papago," *American Anthropologist* 64:2 (1964), 340-50.

⁴² Dean Saxton, Lucille Saxton, and Susie Enos, *Tohono O'odham/Pima to English, English to Tohono O'odham/Pima Dictionary*, 2nd edition, R. L. Cherry, ed., (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998 [1983]).

specific studies in O'odham linguistics, including George Herzog's work on O'odham lexicon and culture change, David Shaul's work on the historical significance of O'odham song syntax, Jane Hill and Ofelia Zepeda's work on O'odham plurals, and Fitzgerald's work on motion verbs.⁴³

The most general ethnographic works on the O'odham are Frank Russell's classic study of the Akimel O'odham, Ruth Underhill's study of Tohono O'odham social organization, and Alice Joseph, Rosamond B. Spicer, and Jane Chesky's interdisciplinary study of Tohono O'odham.⁴⁴ The major works on the ethnography of Tohono O'odham religious practices are Underhill's overview of Tohono O'odham religion and Donald Bahr's reworking of Underhill's overview of Tohono O'odham religion.⁴⁵ Bahr's co-authored work with Juan Gregorio, David I. Lopez, and Albert Alvarez outlines a Tohono O'odham theory of sickness and David Kozak and David I. Lopez's collaborative work outlines Tohono O'odham devil sickness and devil songs.⁴⁶ Carolyn Smith-Morris studies

⁴³ George Herzog, "Culture Change and Language: Shifts in the Pima Vocabulary," *Language, Culture, and Personality: Essays in Memory of Edward Sapir*, Leslie Spier, A. Irving Hallowell, and Stanley S. Newman, eds., (Menasha, Wis.: Sapir Memorial Fund, 1941), 66-74; David L. Shaul, "Piman Song Syntax: Its Historical Significance," *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society* (1981), 275-83; Jane H. Hill and Ofelia Zepeda, "Tohono O'odham (Papago) Plurals," *Anthropological Linguistics* 40:1 (1998), 1-42; Colleen M. Fitzgerald, "Language Change and Motion Verbs in Tohono O'odham," 2004: 1-6. Accessed by <http://www.uta.edu/faculty/cmfitz/2004lassohandout.pdf>

⁴⁴ Frank Russell, *The Pima Indians* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1980 [1908]); Ruth M. Underhill, *Social Organization of the Papago Indians* (New York: AMS Press, 1969 [1939]); Joseph, Spicer, and Chesky, *The Desert People*.

⁴⁵ Ruth M. Underhill, *Papago Indian Religion* (New York: AMS Press, 1969 [1946]); Ruth M. Underhill, Donald M. Bahr, Baptisto Lopez, Jose Pancho, and David Lopez, *Rainhouse & Ocean: Speeches for the Papago Year* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997 [1979]).

⁴⁶ Donald M. Bahr, Juan Gregorio, David I. Lopez, and Albert Alvarez, *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sickness* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1981 [1973]); Kozak and Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*.

Akimel O’odham discourse and practice in the experience of living with diabetes.⁴⁷ Other noteworthy studies of Tohono O’odham religious traditions, especially those pertaining to Christianity, include Griffith’s study of Tohono O’odham folk chapels, Griffith’s work on Tohono O’odham spiritual geography, Kozak’s study of roadside shrines, William King’s study of the folk Catholicism Tohono O’odham living in Tucson, Eileen Oktavec’s study of Milagros in the so-called “Magdalena corridor” between Tucson and Magdalena, and various works by both Bahr and Kozak, respectively, on contemporary Tohono O’odham Christian traditions.⁴⁸ Since O’odham religious traditions are inextricably linked to the environment in which they live with various plants and animals, one should also note the significance of various works by ethnobiologists, including several by Gary Paul Nabhan and Amadeo Rea.⁴⁹

On the history of O’odham peoples, there is Edward Spicer’s regional history that places the history of O’odham within the broader history of indigenous peoples of the

⁴⁷ Carolyn Smith-Morris, *Diabetes among the Pima: Stories of Survival* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2006).

⁴⁸ James S. Griffith, *The Catholic Religious Architecture of the Papago Reservation, Arizona* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Arizona, 1973); Griffith, *Beliefs and Holy Places*; David Kozak, *The Cult of the Dead: Neocolonialism, Violent Mortality, and Religious Change* (Tempe, Ariz: Arizona State University Department of Anthropology Thesis, 1990); William S. King, *The Folk Catholicism of the Tucson Papagos* (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Arizona Department of Anthropology, 1954); Eileen Oktavec, *Answered Prayers: Miracles and Milagros along the Border* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1995); Donald M. Bahr, “La Longue Conversion des Pimas-Papagos,” *Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec* 21:4 (1991), 5-20; Donald M. Bahr, “Pima-Papago Christianity,” *Journal of the Southwest* 30:2 (1988), 133-67; David Kozak, “Shamanisms: Past and Present,” *Religion and Culture: An Anthropological Focus*, Raymond Scupin, ed., (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999), 106-121.

⁴⁹ Gary Paul Nabhan, *The Desert Smells Like Rain: A Naturalist in Papago Indian Country* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1982); Gary Paul Nabhan, *Gathering the Desert* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985); Gary Paul Nabhan, *Cultures of Habitat: On Nature, Culture, and Story* (Washington: Counterpoint, 1997); Amadeo M. Rea, *At the Desert’s Green Edge: An Ethnobotany of the Gila River Pima* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997); Amadeo M. Rea, *Folk Mammalogy of the Northern Pimans* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998); Amadeo M. Rea, *Wings in the Desert: A Folk Ornithology of the Northern Pimans*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007.

Southwest, Cynthia Radding's comparative histories of the Sonoran Desert and the Amazonian Forests, and David Rich Lewis's comparative agrarian and environmental histories of Northern Utes, Hupa, and Tohono O'odham.⁵⁰ General O'odham histories relating particularly to Tohono O'odham, include monographs by Henry Dobyns, Bernard Fontana, and Winston Erickson.⁵¹ Dobyns is also the author of a labor history, and he has not neglected leisure.⁵² There are only six published Tohono O'odham life histories and two published Akimel O'odham life histories. Most of these are transcribed oral histories, though some of these are also autobiographies written by O'odham. The six Tohono O'odham life histories are Ruth Underhill's biography of Chona, Peter Blaine's transcribed oral history, James McCarthy's memoirs, Kathleen Sands's unusually insightful and reflexive transcription of Theodore Rios's oral histories, Deborah Neff's transcription of Frances Manuel's life history, and Leonard F. Chana, Susan Lobo, and Barbara Chana's co-authored work on the life and art of Leonard F. Chana.⁵³ The two Akimel O'odham oral histories are written by George Webb and Anna

⁵⁰ Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest*; Cynthia Radding, *Landscapes of Power and Identity: Comparative Histories in the Sonoran Desert and the Forests of Amazonia from Colony to Republic* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005); David Rich Lewis, *Neither Wolf Nor Dog: American Indians, Environment, and Agrarian Change* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

⁵¹ Dobyns, *The Papago People*; Fontana, *Of Earth & Little Rain*; Erickson, *Sharing the Desert*.

⁵² Henry F. Dobyns, *Papagos in the Cotton Fields*. Self-published, 1950; Henry F. Dobyns, "Papago Pilgrims on the Town," *Kiva* 16:1/2 (1950), 27-32.

⁵³ Ruth M. Underhill, *Papago Woman* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1979 [1936]); Peter Blaine Sr., *Papagos and Politics* (Tucson: Arizona Historical Society, 1981); also, see the Blain transcripts and videos from Arizona Historical Society archives in Tucson; James McCarthy, *A Papago Traveler: The Memories of James McCarthy* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985); Theodore Rios and Kathleen M. Sands, *Telling a Good One: The Process of a Native American Collaborative Biography* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000); Frances Manuel and Deborah Neff, *Desert Indian Woman: Stories and Dreams* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001); Leonard F. Chana, Susan Lobo, and Barbara Chana, *The Sweet Smell of Home: The Life and Art of Leonard F. Chana* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2009).

Moore Shaw.⁵⁴ Other historically inclined studies include Kathleen Sands's oral history of the Ruth Underhill-Chona collaboration, Ofelia Zepeda's Hia Ced O'odham Oral History Project, and Dobyns's work on the growth of Sonoran Catholicism and the Magdalena pilgrimage in the wake of the Franciscan decline between 1821 and 1846.⁵⁵

Excluding the autobiographies and life histories already covered under the category of "history," there are several significant transcriptions, and studies of, *ho'ok a:ga*, or "Witch Telling," the name given to the whole of Tohono O'odham traditional oral literature. The Tohono O'odham linguist Juan Dolores's bilingual transcription, translation, and explanation of this literature is printed in Dean and Lucille Saxton's book.⁵⁶ Harold Bell Wright also recorded several of these, and other stories that appear nowhere else in print.⁵⁷ Anna Moore Shaw published several stories told among the Akimel O'odham.⁵⁸ John William Lloyd, Ruth Benedict, and Julian Hayden recorded complete tellings of the *ho'ok a:ga*, the last two published by Donald Bahr decades later.⁵⁹ Some of these episodes are also told by various Tohono O'odham in Evers's

⁵⁴ George Webb, *A Pima Remembers* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1959); Shaw, *A Pima Past*.

⁵⁵ Gretchen M. Bataille and Kathleen Mullen Sands *American Indian Women: Telling Their Lives* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); Ofelia Zepeda, "The Sand Papago Oral History Project." (Division of Archeology, Western Archeological and Conservation Center, National Park Service, Tucson: 1985); Dobyns, "Do-It-Yourself Religion," 53-67.

⁵⁶ Dean and Lucille Saxton, *O'otham Hoho'ok A'agitha: Legends and Lore of the Papago and Pima Indians* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1973).

⁵⁷ Harold Bell Wright, *Long Ago Told* (New York: Appleton, 1929).

⁵⁸ Anna Moore Shaw, *Pima Indian Legends*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1972 [1968]).

⁵⁹ John William Lloyd, *Aw-Aw-Tam Indian Nights: The Myths and Legends of the Pimas* (Forgotten Books, 2008 [1911]); Donald Bahr, ed., *O'odham Creation & Related Events: As Told to Ruth Benedict in 1927 in Prose, Oratory, and Song by the Pimas William Blackwater, Thomas Vanyiko, Clara Ahiel, William Stevens, Oliver Wellington, & Kisto* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001); Donald Bahr, Juan Smith, William Smith Allison, and Julian Hayden, *The Short Swift Time of Gods on Earth: The Hohokam Chronicles* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1994).

compilation of indigenous literatures of the southwest.⁶⁰ Bahr has also written, as sole author or co-author, three scholarly monographs focusing on O'odham speeches.⁶¹

The anthropological literature on O'odham song is particularly well developed, thanks to the work of several generations of anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, linguists, and others interested in O'odham song. The first monograph on the subject was written by Frances Densmore.⁶² George Herzog wrote an article on O'odham song and worldviews and two articles on O'odham song style.⁶³ Ruth Underhill wrote an overview of O'odham song throughout the ceremonial year, as did Jane Chesky for her master's thesis.⁶⁴ J. Richard Haefer wrote a short sketch of O'odham song and dance as well as a doctoral dissertation on the so-called "musical theory" of Frances Manuel (who also co-authored her own life-history with Deborah Neff, above).⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Larry Evers, ed., *The South Corner of Time: Hopi, Navajo, Papago, Yaqui Tribal Literature* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1983 [1980]).

⁶¹ Donald M. Bahr, *Pima and Papago Ritual Oratory: A Study of Three Texts* (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press, 1975); Underhill, et al, *Rainhouse & Ocean*; Donald M. Bahr, *How Mockingbirds Are: O'odham Ritual Orations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2011).

⁶² Frances Densmore, *Papago Music* (New York: De Capo Press, 1972 [1929]).

⁶³ George Herzog, "Music in the Thinking of the American Indian," *Peabody Bulletin* (May 1938), 8-12; George Herzog, "A Comparison of Pueblo and Pima Musical Styles," *The Journal of American Folk-Lore* 49:194 (1936) 284-417; George Herzog, "Musical Styles in North America," *Proceedings: Twenty-third International Congress of Americanists*, (1928), 455-58.

⁶⁴ Ruth M. Underhill, *Singing for Power: The Song Magic of the Papago Indians of Southern Arizona* (Tucson and London: University of Arizona Press, 1993 [1938]); Jane Chesky, *The Nature and Function of Papago Music* (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Arizona, 1943).

⁶⁵ John Richard Haefer, *Papago Music and Dance* (Tsaile, AZ: Navajo Community College Press, 1977); John Richard Haefer, *Musical Thought in Papago Culture* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1981).

Donald Bahr outlined a format and method for translating O'odham songs.⁶⁶ For the most part, this is the method followed by Bahr, Kozak, and I myself in the present work. Don Bahr wrote several articles on O'odham song, as sole author or lead author, including a study of various O'odham curing songs, hunting songs, rattlesnake songs, swallow songs, and heaven songs.⁶⁷ Joseph Giff, an Akimel O'odham singer whom Bahr worked with, provides an O'odham interpretation of swallow songs in O'odham, translated by Bahr.⁶⁸ Working with David I. Lopez, David Kozak wrote two studies of O'odham devil songs and one study of whirlwind songs.⁶⁹ Under the direction of Sam Gill, Pretina Stabolepszy wrote a master's thesis on O'odham song as orientation to the world.⁷⁰ J. Andrew Darling and Barnaby V. Lewis wrote an article on O'odham song and

⁶⁶ Donald M. Bahr, "A Format and Method for Translating Songs," *Journal of American Folklore* 96:380 (1983), 170-82.

⁶⁷ Donald M. Bahr and J. Richard Haefer, "Song in Piman Curing," *Ethnomusicology* 22:1 (1978), 89-122; Donald M. Bahr, Joseph Giff, and Manuel Havier, "Piman Songs on Hunting," *Ethnomusicology* 23:2 (1979), 245-96; Donald M. Bahr, "Four Papago Rattlesnake Songs," *Speaking, Singing and Teaching: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Language Variation – Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Southwestern Areal Language and Linguistics Workshop*, Florence Barkin and Elizabeth Brandt, eds. Tempe: Arizona State University Anthropological Research Papers No. 20, 1980: 118-26; Donald M. Bahr, "Pima Swallow Songs," *Cultural Anthropology* 1:2 (1986), 171-87; Donald M. Bahr, "Pima Heaven Songs," *Recovering the Word: Essays on Native American Literature*, Brian Swann and Arnold Krupat, eds., (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1987), 198-246.

⁶⁸ Joseph Giff, "Pima Blue Swallow Songs of Gratitude," Donald M. Bahr, trans., *Speaking, Singing and Teaching: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Language Variation – Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Southwestern Areal Language and Linguistics Workshop*, Florence Barkin and Elizabeth Brandt, eds., (Tempe: Arizona State University Anthropological Research Papers No. 20, 1980), 127-39.

⁶⁹ Kozak and Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*; David L. Kozak and David I. Lopez, "Translating the Boundary between Life and Death in O'odham Devil Songs," *Born in the Blood: On Native American Translation*, Brian Swann, ed., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 275-85; David Kozak, "Whirlwind Songs," *Contemporary Translations of the Native Literatures of North America*, Brian Swann, ed., (Lincoln and Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 340-349.

⁷⁰ Stabolepszy, *Laughing Softly*.

songs. ⁷¹ Adelaide Bahr has written the only study on Spanish hymns sung by O'odham. ⁷² Contemporary *Waila* music has been subject to much anthropological inquiry, particularly by James Griffith, Janet Sturman, and Joan Titus. ⁷³

O'odham Genres of Speech: Narrative, Song, and other Genres

As a framework for interpreting the stories and songs that I have recorded, I will use Donald Bahr's analyses of O'odham speech genres in order to provide a brief narrative map outlining the scope of the primary data used in this work. By sketching a narrative map of O'odham speech genres, my intention is to indicate the special nature of the primary data for this dissertation. ⁷⁴ In particular, I am fortunate that the Lopez family of Santa Rosa was willing to share their six songs that document a journey from their village to Magdalena and back. These six songs are the only songs that I will analyze in this study (see chapter two). When I asked my O'odham consultants questions about their lives and experiences, the genre in which most of them answered most of the time was what I call 'narrative,' (*ha'icu a:gidadag*). However, the O'odham with whom I spent the most time regularly and effortlessly switched to other modes, particularly 'preaching'

⁷¹ J. Andrew Darling and Barnaby V. Lewis, "Songs and Calendar Sticks," *The Hohokam Millennium*, Suzanne K. Fish and Paul R. Fish, eds., (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007), 130-39.

⁷² Bahr, "The Spanish Songs of Papago Indians."

⁷³ James S. Griffith, "Waila: The Social Dance Music of the Tohono O'odham," *Musics of Multicultural America: A Study of Twelve Musical Communities*, Kip Lornell and Anne K. Rasmussen, eds., (London: Schirmer Books, 1997), 187-207; Janet Sturman, "Movement Analysis as a Tool for Understanding Identity: Retentions, Borrowings, and Transformations in Native American *Waila*," *The World of Music* 39:3 (1997), 51-70; Joan Titus, "*Waila* as Transnational Practice," *Transnational Encounters: Music and Performance at the U.S.-Mexico Border*, Alejandro L. Madrid, trans., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 149-167.

⁷⁴ One might also ask why some speech genres are translated as verbs, or actions that produce speech, and why others are nouns, or products of speech. My understanding of the O'odham language is too limited to answer this question with much certainty, but I can say that the O'odham language, like many indigenous languages, has far fewer words than English and more importantly, that many of these words can be translated into English both as nouns and as verbs. See chapter four on *himdag*, for example. Finally, I should note that these grammatical categories are western, rather than indigenous, categories.

(*amog*) and telling me about episodes from *Ho'ok A:gida*, which I occasionally include as “narratives.”

O’odham ‘speech’ (*ñiok*) is divided into at least five major forms: ‘ordinary speech’ (*ñiok*), ‘preaching’ (*amog*), ‘storytelling’ (*a:ag*), ‘oration’ (*ñiokculida*), and ‘singing’ or ‘song’ (*ñe’i*). ‘Storytelling’ is further classified into at least two subgenres: ‘narrative’ (*ha’icu a:gidadag*) and ‘epic legends’ or ‘myth’ (*Ho’ok A:gida*). This study excludes at least two genres that Bahr discusses elsewhere. These two excluded genres are ‘speak,’ or ‘emit sounds’ (*cei*), that is purposeless speech that accomplishes nothing, like that of Mockingbirds (*su:g*), and ‘prayer’ (*soak*) which Bahr translates as ‘cry,’ ‘call,’ or ‘kinship cry.’⁷⁵ With any luck, Bahr would not mind these exclusions, because Bahr likes to think about O’odham criticisms of the Mockingbird as “a criticism by them that extends to all of the world’s ritualized speech [such as ‘prayer’] and canned sentiments....or of what we call in English ‘parroting.’”⁷⁶ Furthermore, these genres were excluded because they were neither volunteered by my O’odham consultants, nor did I ever elicit them.

In contrast to emitting feckless and audience-less speech (*cei*), *ñiok* is ordinary speech or everyday discourse, so that *O’odham ñiok* means something like the ‘speech’ or ‘language of the people.’ ‘Preaching’ (*amog*) is a particular genre that “tells people directly how they should think or behave.”⁷⁷ Bahr notes that this genre “thrives at fiestas, political meetings, funerals, and in all kinds of churches.” Frances Manuel recalled with

⁷⁵ Bahr, *How Mockingbirds Are*, 110-11, 151, n. 3.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 18.

⁷⁷ Bahr, *Pima and Papago Ritual Oratory*, 5.

disdain in her mature old age, saying, “Oh, I hated to be preached!”, suggesting that this mode of speech is inherently condescending, as in when a grandparent directly rebukes a grandchild.⁷⁸

Prose storytelling (*a:ag*) – or more simply ‘telling,’ according to Bahr – is “directed solely towards the people present in the room where the story is told; it is pure storytelling, for human ears alone.”⁷⁹ Bahr further subdivides the category of ‘telling’ (*a:ag*) to include [1] the long creation epic called *Ho’ok A:gida*, or ‘Witch’s Telling,’ and [2] ‘legends’ which contain “fragments of stories attributed to ancient times but lacking a defined place in the unfolding epic of creation; a stock of lore, more or less story-like, about animals, plants, etc.; and stories concerning the recent past as distinct from ancient times.”⁸⁰ I refer to Bahr’s ‘epic’ as ‘myth’ without implying that it is fiction. Frances Manuel calls this “legend.”⁸¹ In contrast to this genre that contains the *Ho’ok A:gida*, or ‘Witch’s Telling,’ whatever we may call the genre in English, *ha’icu a:gidadag*, literally ‘something told,’ is what I call ‘narrative,’ usually in the first person voice. This is Bahr’s “legend,” but I call this a first person historical narrative. Frances Manuel calls these “little stories.”⁸² Like all of the other genres of O’odham speech, *ha’icu a:gidadag*, is

⁷⁸ Manuel and Neff, *Desert Indian Woman*, xxi.

⁷⁹ Bahr, *Pima and Papago Ritual Oratory*, 6.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

⁸¹ Manuel and Neff, *Desert Indian Woman*, 142.

⁸² Frances Manuel explained to Deborah Neff, “I think it is going to be better when the person tells the things that happen, remembers what happened in their life. I’m sure everybody has these stories. I think that’s what should be told! Legends have already been told!” *Ibid.*, 141-142.

admittedly fuzzy. This fuzziness is particularly illustrated by the following statement made by the Akimel O’odham, George Webb, in his autobiographical family history:

The word in the Pima language for “Something Told” is *ha’ichu’a:ga*. In the winter evenings...we would ask Keli:hi to tell us something. Sometimes he would tell us how to behave so that we would grow up to be good people [*amog*, or preaching], or he would tell us things that happened when his father Eaglefeathers was a boy. All these things are *ha’ichu’a:ga*. But so are legends [*Ho’ok A:gida*], and those are what we liked most to hear.⁸³

‘Oration’ (*ñiokculida*), literally “talking-for-someone,” according to Bahr is a genre with a different audience than these previous genres and a greater degree of memorization.⁸⁴ Whereas ‘tellings’ (*a:ag*) are memorized on the level of the episode, ‘orations’ are memorized on the level of the sentence. Unlike ‘tellings,’ orations are not only for live human audiences; they are also ‘prayers’ to “spirits.” Observing that this genre engages multiple audiences, Bahr notes that the category is somewhat arbitrary. However, like songs (*ñe’i*), orations are said to be the historical speech of powerful beings. In Bahr’s words, “[t]he narrators of Pima-Papago oratory – and also of songs – are ancient gods or modern spirits.”⁸⁵ Accordingly, the words in both songs and orations are usually regarded as “the exact words of ancient speakers.”⁸⁶

Where orations are memorized on the level of the sentence, songs (*ñe’i*) are much shorter than both orations and stories and are memorized on the level of the syllable.

⁸³ Webb, *A Pima Remembers*, 91.

⁸⁴ Bahr, *How Mockingbirds*, 6-7.

⁸⁵ Donald M. Bahr, “The Oral Literatures of Small Nations,” *Ethnographic Essays in Cultural Anthropology: A Problem-Based Approach* (Wadsworth Publishing, 2002), 222.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 227; see also Donald Bahr, *O’odham Creation & Related Events*, xxxi.

Songs are the shortest O’odham narrative form.⁸⁷ The speech in songs is said to be the historical speech of powerful entities, but unlike orations, contemporary O’odham, even those fluent in O’odham, often cannot easily understand this speech. The songs are said to be in an obscure “song language” with extra vocables, making this sung speech more stunningly beautiful and enhanced than everyday, ordinary O’odham speech (*ñiok*).⁸⁸ Bahr argues that songs are “the preferred way for people to address spirits” and that they “resemble Japanese hai-kus, [as] terse and snap-shot-like verbal portraits” of life in the desert.⁸⁹ David Kozak calls *ñe’i* “nature poetry” because songs describe “gorgeous landscapes that contain mountains, deserts, and oceans inhabited by plants, animals, birds, insects, the sun, rain, lightning, and other natural phenomena.”⁹⁰ Bahr further explains that “[s]ong texts tend to be extremely terse and ambiguous. Compared with ordinary speech there are changes in word order, vowel length, and consonant value. Syllables are added, deleted, or reduplicated ‘for the sake of the song.’”⁹¹

Ethnomusicologist John Richard Haefer translates *ñe’i* as ‘singing’ and ‘sings.’⁹²

In regard to the genres of ‘telling’ (*a:ag*), ‘oration’ (*ñiokculida*), and ‘singing’ (*ñe’i*), Bahr discerns an inverse relationship between intended audience and story length.⁹³ Songs contain the least story, and their primary audience may be “spirits” more

⁸⁷ Bahr and Haefer, “Song in Piman Curing,” 103.

⁸⁸ Bahr, “The Oral Literatures of Small Nations,” 226.

⁸⁹ Bahr, *Pima and Papago Ritual Oratory*, 6.

⁹⁰ Kozak, “Whirlwind Songs,” 340.

⁹¹ Bahr, Giff, and Havier, “Piman Songs on Hunting,” 246.

⁹² Haefer, *Musical Thought in Papago Culture*, 164.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 7.

than living O’odham. Orations contain more story than songs and are more easily understood by audiences fluent in O’odham. ‘Tellings’ contain the most story, but they are intended for living audiences only, not “spirits.”

Method and Theory in the Anthropology of Pilgrimage: Journeys and Destinations

Although there has been an explosion of pilgrimage studies since the 1970s, particularly within the anthropology of religion, many scholars have commented on the general neglect of pilgrimage. For example, E. Alan Morinis suggests:

Anthropologists have tended to neglect pilgrimages because they were, by definition, exceptional practices, irregular journeys outside habitual social realms. Pilgrimage eludes the attention of the traditional researcher who takes a fixed socio-cultural unit, such as a village, as the subject of study. Pilgrimage also tends not to fit into conventional anthropological categories.⁹⁴

Perhaps even more important than the assumption that pilgrimages are exceptional practices outside of the normal practices of everyday life in the parochial anthropological “village” that dominates most anthropological studies and the inadequacy of anthropological categories that have emerged from “the village” and “the armchair,” the constraints of ordinary academic life necessarily impinge on the anthropological study of pilgrimages, limiting the scope of scholarly research. Mary I. O’Connor, the scholar who has published most recently on the Magdalena pilgrimage and fiesta, explains:

By their very nature as transitory, if regularly occurring, cultural phenomena, pilgrimages are difficult to study extensively in the one- or two-year period that characterizes the bulk of anthropological field research. Because pilgrimages tend to be short in duration, it is not

⁹⁴ E. Alan Morinis, “Introduction: The Territory of the Anthropology of Pilgrimage,” *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, Alan Morinis, ed., (Westport, CT and London: Greenwood Press, 1992), 2.

possible to study them intensively over a long stretch of time. The necessity to observe a pilgrimage several times over a period of years makes it almost impossible to study within the ordinary academic frame of reference.⁹⁵

As several scholars have noted, most pilgrimage studies tend to focus on the destination rather than the journey.⁹⁶ That is, most pilgrimage studies focus on major shrines rather than the movement to, at, and from these places. A striking departure from the more typical shrine-centered model of pilgrimage is Nancy Louise Frey's road ethnography of contemporary travellers to Santiago de Compostela.⁹⁷ Although I had initially hoped to produce a road ethnography somewhat like Frey's, this study neither imitates Frey, nor is it what Bernard Fontana has called "an O'dham Canterbury Tales."⁹⁸ However, my study is similar to Frey's in that the arrival is anticlimactic, as Simon Coleman and John Eade have noted regarding Frey's study; my Magdalena, like Frey's Compostela, "is a largely empty vessel in the text."⁹⁹ Given my aims and methods, the city of Magdalena itself is not the focus of this study. In Alan Morinis's classification of pilgrimage studies, this dissertation is a "fragmentary" study of pilgrimage, as reflected in the table of contents in which each chapter focuses on a different aspect or topic related to O'dham journeys to Magdalena. In focusing on the journey rather than

⁹⁵ Mary I. O'Connor, "The Pilgrimage to Magdalena," *Anthropology of Religion: A Handbook*, Steven D. Glazier, ed., (Westport: Praeger, 1999), 369.

⁹⁶ Simon Coleman and John Eade, eds., *Reframing Pilgrimage: Cultures in Motion* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 2, 4; Morinis, "Introduction," 3, 7; Ann Grodzins Gold, *Fruitful Journeys: The Ways of Rajasthani Pilgrims* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 2000 [1988]).

⁹⁷ Nancy Louise Frey, *Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1998).

⁹⁸ Personal communication.

⁹⁹ Coleman and Eade, *Reframing Pilgrimage*, 11.

the destination, like Michael J. Sallnow's study of Andean pilgrims and Ann Grodzins Gold's study of Rajasthani pilgrims, my examination of O'odham pilgrimages to Magdalena is explicitly aimed at the goal of understanding pilgrimage not as exceptional phenomena, as the Turnerian model of pilgrimage might have it, but as deeply embedded in everyday life.¹⁰⁰

As previously stated, most pilgrimage studies tend to focus on the destination rather than the journey, and this certainly holds true for studies of the Magdalena pilgrimage as well. A major flaw in most academic studies of the Magdalena pilgrimage, then, is that these studies are not actually about the pilgrimage itself – that is, walking to Magdalena – because they are actually about the Magdalena fiesta. As a predictable consequence of this trend, the Magdalena fiesta has been heavily studied, but journeys to Magdalena, whether physical or imagined, have largely passed unnoticed.¹⁰¹ For example, several studies have been explicitly focused on the Magdalena fiesta.¹⁰² Several more studies have focused on specific aspects of the Magdalena fiesta, such as the behavior of pilgrims in the church, commerce, folk art, milagros, drinking, prostitution, and so forth.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Michael J. Sallnow, *Pilgrims of the Andes: Regional Cults in Cusco* (Washington, D.C. and London, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987); Gold, *Fruitful Journeys*; Victor Turner and Edith L.B. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978).

¹⁰¹ O'Connor, "The Pilgrimage to Magdalena," 370.

¹⁰² Muriel Thayer Painter, archival material on the Magdalena fiesta at the Arizona State Museum; Henry F. Dobyns, "Papago Pilgrims on the Town," *Kiva* 16:1/2 (1950), 27-32; Dobyns, *The Religious Festival*, Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, (1960); James S. Griffith, "Magdalena Revisited: The Growth of a Fiesta," *The Kiva* 33:2 (1967), 82-86; Nabhan, *The Desert Smells Like Rain*, 111-119; Nabhan, "The Moveable O'odham Feast of San Francisco," *Native Peoples* 4:2 (1991), 28-34.

¹⁰³ Elisabeth Tooker, "The Pilgrims in Church," *The Kiva* 16:1/2 (1950), 9-13; O'Connor, "The Pilgrimage to Magdalena"; James S. Griffith, "The Magdalena Holy Picture: Religious Folk Art in Two Cultures,"

One of the many difficulties of studying destinations rather than journeys, as O'Connor has noted in her study of the Magdalena fiesta, is that

Because of the temporary nature of pilgrimages, it is almost impossible to create the face-to-face relationships that have traditionally characterized long-term fieldwork. The field researcher is therefore confronted with the necessity of going up to strangers and asking them personal questions. The drawbacks inherent in this are obvious.

Indeed, this seems to have been an important factor limiting O'Connor's ability to study the Magdalena fiesta and pilgrimage. However, as O'Connor notes, Griffith demonstrates one solution to these methodological difficulties: maintaining contact over many years with people who regularly go on pilgrimages to Magdalena, accompanying them on their journeys to Magdalena, and developing rapport through intensive interaction.¹⁰⁴ Indeed, this has been my own strategy in focusing on Tohono O'odham pilgrimages to Magdalena. My method, like Swanson's model of seeing "through family eyes," has generally been more like what Raymond J. Michalowski and Jill Dubisch have called "observant participation" than participant-observation.¹⁰⁵

Like O'Connor, I have found the Magdalena fiesta bewildering.¹⁰⁶ This, no doubt accounts for my neglect of the Magdalena fiesta as much as the fact that there have been

New York Folklore Quarterly 3:4 (1982), 71-82; Oktavec, *Answered Prayers*; Thomas Sheridan, "Female Public Drinking Patterns among the 1971 Magdalena Pilgrims," *Student Anthropologist* 4:2 (1972), 47-52; Rios and Sands, *Telling a Good One*, 148-154.

¹⁰⁴ O'Connor, "The Pilgrimage to Magdalena," 376; Griffith, *Beliefs and Holy Places*.

¹⁰⁵ Tod Swanson, "Through Family Eyes: Towards a More Adequate Perspective for Viewing Native American Religious Life," *American Indian Quarterly* 21:1 (1997), 57-71; Raymond J. Michalowski and Jill Dubisch, *Run For The Wall: Remembering Vietnam on a Motorcycle Pilgrimage* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 20-21; see also Jill Dubisch, "'Heartland of America': Memory, Motion and the (Re)construction of History on a Motorcycle Pilgrimage," *Reframing Pilgrimage: Cultures in Motion*, Simon Coleman and John Eade, eds., (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 113.

¹⁰⁶ O'Connor, "The Pilgrimage to Magdalena," 378.

many more studies of the Magdalena fiesta than there have been of journeys too Magdalena. The simple fact remains that I preferred walking out on the road in the rural Sonoran countryside over the hustle and bustle of the city of Magdalena at its busiest and most chaotic time of year. When I walked into Magdalena for the first time in 2009 my senses were overwhelmed as the combined, yet distinct, smells of urine, feces, vomit, tequila, cerveza, elote, shrimp, and carne asada filled my nostrils and my ears ached from the cacophony of carnival rides and a man's voice selling rugs through a blaring load-speaker in the church plaza. At the same time, I knew that most O'dham did not share my sentiments, dispositions, or pretensions. Most were clearly elated at their climactic arrival and when I once complained about the blaring loud speaker, someone said, "Those are nice rugs." Whereas some aspects of the fiesta strike me as appalling, I know that the fiesta also has its appeal.

Purposeful Wandering: Movement, Method, and Theory

Thomas Tweed turns to James Clifford's metaphor of travel in reimagining theories as itineraries, or more precisely, as "embodied travels."¹⁰⁷ In Tweed's conception of theory as travel, he distinguishes between academic theorizing as "purposeful wandering" and "the displacements of voluntary migrants who seek settlement, tourists who chase pleasure on round-trip journeys, or pilgrims who depart only to return home after venerating a sacred site."¹⁰⁸ In this regard, I distinguish between my own "embodied

¹⁰⁷ Thomas A. Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2006), 8-9.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 11.

travels” in accompanying pilgrims to Magdalena and back, and my own theoretical “purposeful wandering” in other spaces and times – on breaks alongside the road to Magdalena, in casual conversations at wakes and fiestas, and during recorded interviews with my O’odham consultants. In the former case, my O’odham collaborators might describe my own movements in O’odham as *him*, or “walking,” a purposeful movement to a particular place; in the later case, my O’odham collaborators might describe my own movements as either *oiyopo* or *oimed*, both of which might be translated as “wandering,” or, as Donald Bahr prefers, “to move about without going anyplace in particular.”¹⁰⁹ (See chapter four for more on the distinction between “walking” and “wandering.”)

Nonetheless, in extending Clifford’s notions of “dwelling-in-travel” and “travel-in-dwelling,” I stand with Tweed in declaring that “scholars are dwelling-in-crossing and crossing-in-dwelling.”¹¹⁰ As “[t]he scholar moves back and forth from the desk to the archives, from home to the field, from here to there and now to then,” *Walking to Magdalena* has been done in crossing and dwelling as I strive toward the articulation of O’odham ways, concepts, and stories of moving through place, challenging “the authorial voice of most scholarly studies [in which] the interpreter is everywhere at once or nowhere in particular.”¹¹¹ In contrast to the pretensions of such placeless perspectives, my “purposeful wanderings” have taken place primarily in the homes and offices of my O’odham hosts, insightful consultant-theorists, in archives, and along the road to Magdalena in the company of my fellow walkers. In my scholarly narrative, I attempt to

¹⁰⁹ Bahr, Giff, and Havier, “Piman Songs on Hunting,” 262.

¹¹⁰ Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling*, 178.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 181-182.

illustrate some of these positioned sightings - whether my own, or of my O’odham colleagues - as they have occurred in particular contexts, places, and times.

Although this study would not have been possible without the support and engagement of my O’odham interlocutors, *Walking to Magdalena* is not a work of joint authorship. While I am the sole author of this text and as such I am responsible for any errors it may contain – even those errors that might have been avoided through joint authorship – my goal is also to ensure that the voices of my fellow walkers and collaborating consultants not only come through in this text, but also cut against the interpretive grains toward which I may be inclined. The insider-outsider, ethnographer-informant dichotomies do not, I hope, constitute this work. Indeed, I do not subscribe to the convention in which “[t]he native speaks” and “the anthropologist writes,” thereby ensuring that “[t]he writing/inscribing practices of indigenous collaborators are erased.”¹¹²

I agree with Robert Orsi that we need “to include the voices of our sources more clearly – and disruptively – in our texts, inviting them to challenge and question our interpretations of them, to propose their own alternative narratives, to question our idioms from the perspective of their own, and, in general to break into the authority of our understandings and interpretations and to reveal their tentative character.”¹¹³ This approach also resonates with Greg Johnson, who urges that religious studies scholars should stop “straining to hear the one ‘true voice’ of tradition,” in order to “be attuned to

¹¹² James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1997), 23.

¹¹³ Robert A. Orsi, *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005), 175.

a cacophony of voices.”¹¹⁴ As an alternative to fixating on distinctions between (usually) non-indigenous scholars and indigenous subjects, Tod Swanson urges scholars to see Native American religious life “through family eyes,” insofar as “[r]elatives may be loved but they are never mistaken for angels.”¹¹⁵

In writing *Walking to Magdalena*, I seek to avoid the practices of inscription in the academy that erase indigenous collaborators, sidestepping what Michel de Certeau has called “*writing that conquers*,” inscribing violence through the physical movement of writing itself.¹¹⁶ Instead, much like Tweed’s “purposeful wandering,” I aspire, through writing, to achieve a playful, yet serious, tentative type of “messaging around,” in order “to make a kind of *perruque* [literally “the wig,” an expression referring to the diversionary tactic of workers disguising their own creative work as work for the employer’s profit, such as writing a love letter ‘on company time’] of writing itself.”¹¹⁷

Although *Walking to Magdalena* is about O’odham more than it is about anything else, such as academic theories of religion, or myself, I am comfortable with occasionally using first person narratives that describes my own experiences of walking to Magdalena with my fellow O’odham walkers. (Indeed, several O’odham walkers have assumed that this is *all* that I would write about. In particular, one O’odham walker in 2009 joked that she didn’t want to read about herself in my book, which she spuriously titled *My Time*

¹¹⁴ Greg Johnson, *Sacred Claims: Repatriation and Living Tradition* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 160.

¹¹⁵ Swanson, “Through Family Eyes,” 67.

¹¹⁶ Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, Tom Conley, trans., (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988 [1975]), xxv.

¹¹⁷ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Steven Rendall, trans., (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1984 [1980]), 25, 28.

Among the Papagos!) I cannot exclude myself from this study, because “lived religion refers not only to religion as lived by others but also to life as lived by those who approach others’ everyday experience to learn about culture and history; it refers, in other words, to the conjuncture of two lived worlds in the study of religion.”¹¹⁸ Because ethnographic knowledge is inherently dialogical, such encounters call for profound engagement. As Mikhail Bakhtin has forcefully argued, “To think about the consciousness of other people means to *talk with them; otherwise they immediately turn to us their objectivized side*: they fall silent, close up, and congeal into finished, objectivized images.”¹¹⁹ To co-opt the titles of two popular oral history manuals, my objective is to establish “a shared authority” while “making many voices heard.”¹²⁰ This collaborative process is particularly important because my arguments are necessarily tentative and at times speculative.

Building on previous critiques, most notably by James Clifford and George E. Marcus, against the ethnographic convention in which the ethnographer appears only at the beginning and then disappears to represent the reality of other people’s lives from the perspective of nowhere in particular, Jill Dubisch declared two decades ago:

No longer is the personal inevitably isolated within an introduction describing the ‘conditions of fieldwork,’ but rather the ‘I’ of the anthropologist tends to wander freely throughout the ethnographic narrative, blurring the boundary between ‘personal’ and ‘objective’ and

¹¹⁸ Robert Orsi, “Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion,” *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice*, David Hall, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 18.

¹¹⁹ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 68.

¹²⁰ Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990); Charles E. Trimble, Barbara W. Sommer, Mary Kay Quinlan, *The American Indian Oral History Manual: Making Many Voices Heard* (Walnut Creek, Cali: Left Coast Press, 2008).

reflecting a greater self-consciousness about the anthropologist's own position vis-à-vis those of the culture being studied.¹²¹

Within pilgrimage studies, the best ethnographers reveal their own field experiences throughout their work and demonstrate how these experiences shape their ethnographies. Indeed, this has long been the mainstay within the anthropology of pilgrimage, with perhaps the best examples being Michael J. Sallnow, Ann Grodzins Gold, and Nancy Louise Frey.¹²² Although the necessary presence of the ethnographer throughout the ethnography has become the status quo – and not the avant-garde (as it might have been three or four decades ago) – in this work I follow the older, more well-established model in which first-person accounts are confined to the introduction in order to focus on the data and analysis throughout the rest of the work. This editorial redaction of removing myself from this work, with the exception of the present chapter, considerably simplifies the writing process by following the format of the “traditional ethnography,” usually set in a quaint village with a formulaic “arrival story.” As a compromise, I seek to highlight – within this chapter alone – my own experiences and how these experiences have shaped this work. However, at times I include reference to the ethnographer, whether as an interlocutor in a conversation or as a physical presence whose body and movements evoke commentary from others, which is then analyzed as data. I firmly agree with Mary I. O'Connor that “[t]he role of the ethnographer must at the very least be much more prominently displayed in the ethnography itself. The personal experiences of the

¹²¹ Jill Dubisch, *In A Different Place: Pilgrimage, Gender, and Politics at a Greek Island Shrine* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 5.

¹²² Sallnow, *Pilgrims of the Andes*; Gold, *Fruitful Journeys*; Frey, *Pilgrim Stories*.

fieldworker necessarily affect the product and thus must be described in much more detail than is generally found in ethnographic accounts.”¹²³

Fieldwork Context

Because *Walking to Magdalena* is based primarily on conversations that I have recorded with my O’odham consultants, it is necessary to say something about how they were collected. I should begin by pointing out that while I spent a total of only four weeks over a period of four years – or one week each year in 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 – actually walking to Magdalena alongside other O’odham walkers, and approximately another four weeks, or one month, spread out over the course of four years living on the Tohono O’odham Nation, I have been studying contemporary and historical Tohono O’odham religious traditions for approximately five years.

My first trip to the Tohono O’odham Nation was in early May of 2009. At the time I was working as a research associate for the American Indian Studies Program at Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona. Professor Eddie F. Brown, then Director of the program was eager to put me to work on a significant project that would be of mutual interest to both of us as well as a service to the Tohono O’odham Nation. At first, the plan was to conduct oral history research on the so-called “Indian Village” right next to the 1.5 mile-wide open pit mine in Ajo, Arizona, a border town on the western-most reaches of the Tohono O’odham Nation and Dr. Brown’s hometown. Dr. Brown asked me to accompany him on the walk to Magdalena, which he had been contemplating for some time, particularly at the urging of Mary Narcho, a long-time friend and then-peer-

¹²³ O’Connor, “The Pilgrimage to Magdalena,” 377.

member of the governing board for Desert Diamond Casinos, the Tohono O’odham Nation’s gaming venture. As a religious studies scholar working with indigenous peoples in the southwest with an interest in indigenous conceptions of religious geography and a growing interest in indigenous Christianities, this project quickly consumed nearly all of my scholarly attention and much of my personal time and resources.¹²⁴ I quickly realized that this journey would become more than just a passing interest and that the walk would be an ideal candidate for a doctoral dissertation, which I needed to write in order to earn a Ph.D. in the School of Historical, Philosophical, and Religious Studies at Arizona State University.

As I previously mentioned, I began participating in the journey to Magdalena in 2009, and I had begun bibliographic research on Tohono O’odham in 2008. In the spring of 2011, between my second and third pilgrimages to Magdalena, I started to work on gaining grassroots support among the walk’s organizers and other community leaders in the Tohono O’odham Nation for doing an oral history project that would document the history of the walk to Magdalena, particularly for the group of walkers that I had been accompanying. During this period, some of my academic advisors were uncertain whether anyone would be willing to talk with me about the walk if I were officially researching the walk, rather than simply participating in it. Indeed, I shared this concern as well and I grew increasingly worried until one day when I walked into the Department

¹²⁴ My previous publications include Seth Schermerhorn, “Book Review of Michael F. Steltenkamp’s *Nicholas Black Elk: Medicine Man, Missionary, Mystic*,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 60:1 (2010), 87; “Secularisation by the ‘Sacred’? Discourses of ‘Religion’ and the San Francisco Peaks,” *Eras* 11 (2009); *Regulating Desecration and the San Francisco Peaks: Native American Sacred Land Claims and the Problem of Authenticity*. Boulder, Colo: University of Colorado Department of Religious Studies M.A. Thesis, (2008); “Christianity, Kachinas, Crosses, and Kivas: Religion, Resistance, and Revolt in Seventeenth Century New Mexico,” *Next: The Graduate Student Journal for the Academic Study of Religion* 1 (2007).

of Human Services' Behavioral Health building in Sells to meet with Louis "Tony" Lopez, one of the organizer's for Felix Antone's walk. I told him about the oral history project that I wanted to do and asked for his support if he thought that the project would be useful to the Tohono O'odham Nation. Right away, he gave me his full support, but told me that the person I should really be talking to about the journey to Magdalena and its history was his father, Simon Lopez. From this point on, nearly all of the O'odham that I spoke with in the course of this project were either people that I met on the walk to Magdalena or people that other people told me I should talk with.

When I arrived at Simon's ranch in Santa Rosa, he was full of energy and eager to begin working with me. I was scarcely out of my dust-covered 2000 Ford Escort when he began telling me about his earliest memories from his childhood of the journey to Magdalena in covered wagons and how he begged his parents to let him ride to Magdalena on horseback all alone. Of course, I was exuberant: not only was a knowledgeable and respected elder clearly willing and excited to work with me, but it soon became clear that we were building a strong rapport together. Over the time that we spent together in the last three years, I feel that we grew close. At various points in the gestation of this project, I thought that my entire dissertation could easily focus exclusively on his songs, stories, memories, and understanding of the pilgrimage to Magdalena.¹²⁵ From summer 2011 through summer 2013, I spent many days, weekends, and even a few weeks when I could spare it, in the company of the Lopezes, talking but also attending fiestas and wakes where his family's group of singers and dancers would

¹²⁵ This is to say that this study could have easily focused on Simon Lopez's interpretation of O'odham journeys to Magdalena and my interpretation of his interpretation, like Barbara G. Myerhoff's *Peyote Hunt: The Sacred Journey of the Huichol Indians* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1974).

perform at villages across the Tohono O’odham Nation, and working with Simon on tasks that were important to him, like painting the new Santa Rosa feast house, or working on various other small projects around Simon’s ranch, like hoeing in preparation for a feast, and cleaning up in the feast’s wake. When I told Simon at the San Juan feast in June of 2013 that I had accepted a position at Hamilton College in Central New York, there were tears in both of our eyes. Now, having moved across the country to assume this academic post, it is Simon whom I most miss spending time with back on the Tohono O’odham Nation.

With Simon’s support and interest in this project, beginning in the summer of 2011, everything soon became much easier. Simon and his wife, Florence, welcomed me into their home and frequently fed me their delicious food. They also offered a spare room for me to use whenever I wanted to come stay with them in a detached house on their ranch. Their hospitality was invaluable and gave me a base from which to work on the Tohono O’odham Nation so that I could spend less time driving back and forth between my apartment in Tempe and the Tohono O’odham Nation. Indeed, their family’s hospitality has long been indispensable to generations of non-O’odham scholars interested in Tohono O’odham language, culture, history, and religious traditions, including, most notably, Ruth Underhill, Donald Bahr, and Amadeo Rea.

To call the extended talks that I recorded with the O’odham whom I came to know “interviews” might suggest a degree of formality that was usually, and deliberately, lacking. Most conversations were typically open-ended as I wanted each narrator’s interests to guide our sessions. I often merely introduced my research focus and let my O’odham consultants discuss what they considered to be important. Though I did ask

direct questions for clarification as a follow-up to each narrator's stories, most of these conversations did not neatly follow a question and answer format. On occasion, though, I felt like I was being interviewed when O'odham wanted to know more about me, why I wanted to pursue this project, and what my intentions were for giving back to the Tohono O'odham Nation, my fellow walkers, and the people who were willing to talk with me. I never felt very uncomfortable during these moments, because I agree that these are important questions for any researcher to continually ask one's self and accountability from stakeholders and community members is a vital part of this process.

I did not pay or offer money to the people who graciously allowed me to record their stories and our conversations. I did, however, try to bring small contributions of food or water to those families – particularly the Lopez families of Santa Rosa and Quijotoa – that took me into their homes, gave me a place to sleep, and prepared additional food to serve another mouth at the table. I should stress that my contributions were akin to bringing a side dish to a barbecue as basic etiquette, and I rarely gave more food or drink than I received.

Year after year, I had hoped to record conversations and stories with O'odham “walkers” on our way to Magdalena. Finally, when I began my fourth year of walking to Magdalena in 2012, and I had all of the necessary approvals from the Tohono O'odham Nation and Arizona State University's Institutional Review Board. However, I quickly realized that there never seemed to be an appropriate time to make these recordings. Moreover, though there were frequent breaks during the journey in which I could have pursued my research, I was often exhausted and required rest just like most other walkers. Therefore, no recordings were ever made while en route, in Magdalena, or on the return

journey back home. Instead, these conversations took place in a different context, usually in the homes and places of work back on the Tohono O’odham Nation.

During the time I spent on the Tohono O’odham Nation, I recorded the conversations and stories of 12 O’odham narrators, including both “walkers” and non-“walkers,” 9 men, and 3 women. This dissertation draws on more than 40 hours of narration, from which I have made a transcript of more than one thousand pages. I have transcribed most of these conversations myself, with the exception of four speakers – Verlon Carlos Jose, Royetta Thomas, Mary Ann Ramirez, and Mary Narcho – which I would have preferred to transcribe myself but was unable to fit into the schedule. For these four speakers, I hired a transcription service and carefully oversaw and edited the transcripts of the narrations. This transcription process itself took many months and was often quite difficult as well as monotonous since I would frequently rewind and replay the recording to make sure that I got it down right. Like walking, this too was “foot work,” with my foot tapping away at the pedal for hours each day and cramping quite regularly. Nonetheless, in spite of these difficulties, this process had many benefits. Not only did the laborious task of transcription boost my confidence in the accuracy of the texts; it also provided me the opportunity to methodically relive the recording process in a deliberate and slow manner, often listening to each speaker two or three times.

A note on my orthography for the O’odham language: when citing secondary texts, I have used the orthographic transcriptions as they appear in the sources. In all other cases, I have relied on the orthography officially adopted by the Tohono O’odham Nation, so the transcriptions and translations of these narratives follow the orthography

developed by Albert Alvarez and Kenneth Hale.¹²⁶ I am particularly grateful to Louis Anthony Lopez and Simon Lopez for taking on the difficult and time-consuming task of recording and translating the songs that constitute their “Traditional Rosary,” so that this work can contribute not only to the literature *on* Tohono O’odham, but the literature *in* Tohono O’odham, and promote reading and writing in the O’odham language.

My O’odham Nickname: An Ethnographic Anecdote

The first year that I walked to Magdalena, I was not sufficiently prepared for the journey. Although I had packed everything that I needed, my backpack was often inaccessible during much of the first two days, driving from Sells, Arizona across the border to Cedagī Wahia, and further on south to Tubutama, where we actually began walking the remaining distance of about 36 miles to Magdalena. Separated from my supplies – most notably my sunscreen – I was already badly sunburned before we even started walking.

With each passing day, my skin got redder and the layers of dirt, sweat, and sunscreen further browned my exposed skin left unprotected by the t-shirt, shorts, low-cut socks, and shoes I was wearing. Although my sunburn was the source of physical discomfort, it also elicited some sympathy as well as humor from my fellow O’odham walkers.

“You’re starting to look like one of us!” Verlon Jose joked. Of course, banter like this can go on for days, even years.

¹²⁶ Alvarez and Hale, “Toward a Manual of Papago Grammar.”

That first year, in the camp on the last night before we walked into Magdalena, I took off my shoes as I did every night before going to bed. Although I somehow avoided getting any blisters, my feet were sore and achy so I delighted in taking off my socks, rubbing my feet, and walking barefoot on the rocky ground.

It was dark, but the moon shined brightly that night illuminating our camp. I remember, it was like a super-powered street lamp that shined down so intensely that it was hard for me to fall asleep.

It didn't take long. Walking around camp I was continually met with soft laughter, murmurs, and smothered giggles. Finally, an O'odham woman explained that my feet were so white that they seemed to glow in the dark. She told me they were calling me "White Feet," or *S-tohă Ta:tađ*.

As it were, White Feet was a fitting name as well as a good joke. For all the jokes about me becoming an O'odham, my feet betrayed me. My new name memorialized my predicament, I thought.

I had been called other names too:

Smily. Presumably because of my shit-eating grin.

Sneezy. Presumably because of my notoriously loud sneezing that can be heard from miles away. On numerous occasions, I suffered from involuntary sneezing fits that went on for minutes. "Someone is thinking of you," I was often told. In particular, I tended to go into sneezing hysterics at sunrise each morning when all of the walkers were smudged with the smoke of *Şegoi*, also known as Creosote, or "Greasewood" – the most important traditional medicine to contemporary O'odham. According to O'odham oral traditions, *Şegoi* was the first being created by *Jewed Ma:kai*, or Earth Doctor, which he

made on the “greasy earth” that he molded from his own skin and sweat.¹²⁷ *Segoi* is a resinous bush with perhaps more than 50 volatile oils, which give the plant its distinctive odor. The plant especially gives off its strong aroma when it is made wet by summer monsoons and when it is burned. Ethnobotanist Gary Paul notoriously asked a young O’odham boy what the desert smelled like. The child’s immediate response, “the desert smells like rain,” provided the title for the now classic book. Nabhan explains that “[t]he question had triggered a scent – creosote bushes after a storm – their aromatic oils released by the rains. His nose remembered being out in the desert, overtaken: *the desert smells like rain.*”¹²⁸ However, in my case, if the desert smells like rain, then it makes me sneeze.¹²⁹

According to Alice Joseph, Rosamond Spicer, and Jane Chesky, O’odham nicknames given to white people reflect some physical characteristic of the individual named.¹³⁰ Ruth Underhill also noted that O’odham names are often descriptive in referring to some peculiarity of the individual named, though she notes that these names are “always slightly derogatory.”¹³¹ Returning to my name, “White Feet,” surely the appellation referred to the relative whiteness of my feet in contrast to the rest of my unprotected and badly sun-burned skin. Was my new name also be a vaguely disparaging light-hearted insult? As much as my burned skin, my newly exposed white feet were a

¹²⁷ Lloyd, *Aw-Aw-Tam Indian Nights*, 16.

¹²⁸ Nabhan, *The Desert Smells Like Rain*, 6.

¹²⁹ To be fair, the desert makes Nabhan sneeze too. See Gary Paul Nabhan, “The Amaranth Greens: The Meat of the Poor People,” *Gathering the Desert* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985), 93-104.

¹³⁰ Joseph, Spicer, and Chesky, *The Desert People*, 47.

¹³¹ Underhill, *Social Organization of the Papago Indians*, 176.

visible physical sign written on my body signaling that I was out of place in the desert and ill-prepared, lacking the necessary disciplined intentionality required to avoid a sunburn in the first place.

In my third year, during a brief break alongside the road to Magdalena, an O'odham woman walking directly behind me complimented another person for his steady stride. When she addressed me, she said, "I don't even know what you're doing!" I responded with nervous laughter, worrying that I had been distracting her as I regularly altered my gait to avoid blisters and evenly distribute the weight of my backpack and myself on my feet. As time passed, I wondered, could the name "White Feet" also refer to my characteristic way of walking?

Again, I remembered back to my first year walking to Magdalena. I thought that I would be walking around 100 miles over a period of 5 days, averaging about 20 miles per day. Imagine my surprise, then, when I learned that we would be walking only 36 miles in 5 days, averaging about 7 miles per day. Even with frequent and sometimes lengthy breaks for resting, walking only 7 miles per day requires an extraordinarily slow pace since we usually began walking each day before sun-rise and set up camp typically after sun down. At times, particularly during the first year, I found myself day-dreaming about sprinting ahead of the group, making my way to Saint Francis in before lunch, and rushing back to Phoenix to be home in time for dinner!

Riding north across the border as we returned to the United States, I remember someone asking me how the walk had been. Thinking only of the unhurried, deliberate, and excruciatingly sluggish speed that involuntarily familiarized me with my own hasty, impatient disposition, I exclaimed, "We moved at a crucifyingly slow pace!" Apparently,

my own impatience caused me so much suffering that I had imagined myself on *la via dolorosa*, bearing my backpack on my achy shoulders and my staff in my arthritic hands as my cross. In that moment, I knew that no one else would depict their own experiences in such overly dramatic and self-indulgent terms. Clearly, my own attempt at suffering alongside other O’odham walkers could only take me so far toward a deeper understanding of how O’odham might variously conceptualize and experience the walk to Magdalena; for this, I would need to explore how O’odham themselves represent the journey to Magdalena in their own words and practices – in songs, sticks, and stories.

CHAPTER 1

PLACE AND PERSON

This chapter argues that O’odham have made Christianity their own by embedding Christianity within their ancestral landscapes. It also introduces the intertwined notions of place and person and illustrates some of the ways in which people and places become associated with one another.

Making Christianity Their Own

This research builds upon the foundational work of Michael McNally, whose study of Ojibwe Christians privileged insider voices in order to appreciate “what *native people made of Christianity*.”¹³² McNally argues that in order for an interpretive shift to take place in which indigenous Christianities may be fully appreciated as both indigenous and Christian, academics must redirect their attention “away from what *missionaries intended* [in order] to appreciate what *native people made of Christianity*.”¹³³ Although a broad body of literature has developed addressing what Christianity has done to American Indians, the literature on what American Indians have done to Christianity has only begun to emerge.¹³⁴ Crucially, this interpretive shift highlights the agency of

¹³² Michael McNally, *Ojibwe Singers: Hymns, Grief, and a Native Culture in Motion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 9; emphasis in original.

¹³³ Ibid.; emphasis in original; for approaches focused on the agency and intentions of missionaries, see James Wendell Pinegar, *Church Growth Among the Papago Indians of Southern Arizona* (Abilene, Texas: Abilene Christian College M.S. Thesis, 1971).

¹³⁴ Vine Deloria, Jr., *God is Red: A Native View of Religion* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2003 [1972]); James Treat, ed., *Native and Christian: Indigenous Voices on Religious Identity in the United States and Canada* (New York: Routledge, 1996); James Treat, *Around the Sacred Fire: Native Religious Activism in the Red Power Era* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Aparecida Vilaça and Robin M. Wright, eds, *Native Christians: Modes and Effects of Christianity among Indigenous Peoples of the Americas* (London: Ashgate Books, 2009); Joel W. Martin and Mark A. Nicholas, eds, *Native Americans*,

indigenous peoples in sincerely adopting Christianity – though not necessarily the same Christianity of the missionaries – in ways that have been meaningful to them as indigenous peoples.

While McNally's focus on "what *native people made of* Christianity" is important, it is not original. McNally's position follows from the work of Michel de Certeau, who noted the following in relation to the Spanish colonization of the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas:

the Indians nevertheless often *made of* the rituals, representations, and laws imposed on them something quite different from what their conquerors had in mind; they subverted them not by rejecting or altering them, but by using them with respect to ends and references foreign to the system they had no choice but to accept....The strength of their difference lay in procedures of "consumption."¹³⁵

Following this paradigm shift, this work examines some of the ways in which the Tohono O'odham, or "desert people," formerly known as Papagos, of southern Arizona and northern Sonora have made Christianity their own by focusing on the annual pilgrimage made by many O'odham to Magdalena, Sonora, Mexico. Although scholars agree that the journey to Magdalena is the largest and most significant event in the annual cycle of Tohono O'odham Christianity, it has never before been the subject of sustained

Christianity, and the Reshaping of the American Religious Landscape (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Luke Eric Lassiter, Clyde Ellis, and Ralph Kotay, *The Jesus Road: Kiowas, Christianity, and Indian Hymns* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2002); Jennifer Scheper Hughes, *Biography of a Mexican Crucifix: Lived Religion and Local Faith from the Conquest to the Present* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity?: The Gospel beyond the West* (Grand Rapids, Mich. and Cambridge: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003).

¹³⁵ Emphasis in original; Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Steven Rendall, trans., (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1984 [1980]), xiii.

scholarly inquiry.¹³⁶ Using the walk to Magdalena as the point of entry into the larger question of what Tohono O’odham have made of Christianity, this study seeks to understand Tohono O’odham Christian traditions as they have been understood by their practitioners, in their own words and practices in songs, sticks, and stories. While this ethnographer ultimately cannot claim to have succeeded in this attempt to understand O’odham Christian traditions as O’odham practitioners themselves understand these traditions, in pursuit of this goal participant-observation of the journey was undertaken for four consecutive years. The ethnographer accompanied a large group of 100-200 O’odham walkers on their pilgrimage to Saint Francis in Magdalena in late September and early October. In this time it has become clear that, for many O’odham, Christianity is simply the way of their grandmothers and grandfathers.

Christianity and Tohono O’odham Landscapes

Tohono O’odham ways of life encompass both “Native” and “Christian” practices and these “Christian” practices are typically categorized as one of two types, *sasa:nto himdag*, or saints’ way, and *jiawul himdag*, or devil way.¹³⁷ Judging from phonological evidence alone, George Herzog concluded that these Spanish derived religious terms –

¹³⁶ Ofelia Zepeda, “The Sand Papago Oral History Project.” (Tucson: Division of Archeology, Western Archeological and Conservation Center, National Park Service, 1985), 16.

¹³⁷ Donald M. Bahr, Juan Gregorio, David I. Lopez, and Albert Alvarez, *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sick: Ká:cim Múmkidag* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1981 [1973]); Donald M. Bahr, “Pima-Papago Christianity,” *Journal of the Southwest* 30:2 (1988), 133-67; David L. Kozak and David I. Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs: Tohono O’odham Poetics* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999); David Kozak, “Shamanisms: Past and Present,” *Religion and Culture: An Anthropological Focus*, Raymond Scupin, ed., (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999), 106-121; alternatively, anthropologist and ethnohistorian Daniel Reff argues that the Tohono O’odham devil way is pre-European in Daniel T. Reff, “Sympathy for the Devil: Devil Sickness and Lore among the Tohono O’odham,” *Journal of the Southwest* 50:4 (2008), 355-376.

and perhaps the traditions themselves – “must have come from Spanish indirectly, through the agency of other Indian languages.”¹³⁸ *Sa:nto himdag*, the singular form of the plural *sasa:nto himdag*, is associated with O’odham relations with various saints who reside in often tiny chapels and in home altars.¹³⁹ In contrast, *jiawul himdag* is associated with mountains, mines, horses, cattle, cowboys, and those who work with horse hair. If each O’odham village has a chapel for saints to live in, then it might be said that each village also has a nearby mountain in which *jejawul*, or deceased cowboys, reside.¹⁴⁰ In the O’odham language, saints and devils are classified within a semantic system in which these entities are classed with other entities including coyote, the ocean, the giant saguaro cactus, and various other plant and animal species as *O’odham* or *hemajkam*, terms that are often translated as referring to “people” or “spirits” with varying degrees of power who are capable of helping and hurting others by causing various types of sickness which are said to afflict only O’odham.¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ George Herzog, “Culture Change and Language: Shifts in the Pima Vocabulary,” *Language, Culture, and Personality: Essays in Memory of Edward Sapir*. Leslie Spier, A. Irving Hallowell, and Stanley S. Newman, eds. (Menasha, Wis.: Sapir Memorial Fund, 1941), 69-70.

¹³⁹ James Seavey Griffith, *The Catholic Religious Architecture of the Papago Reservation, Arizona* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Arizona Department of Anthropology, 1973); James S. Griffith, “The Folk-Catholic Chapels of the Papagueria,” *Pioneer America* 7:2 (1975), 21-36.

¹⁴⁰ Kozak and Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*; David L. Kozak and David I. Lopez. “Translating the Boundary between Life and Death in O’odham Devil Songs,” *Born in the Blood: On Native American Translation*, Brian Swann, ed., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 279; I should also note here that not all O’odham agree with this association. For example, when I spoke with Mary Narcho, she heartily negated this association and was offended by the idea that cowboys might have something to do with devils. She asked, “Why cowboys? Two of my boys are cowboys and one of my sons was a professional cowboy. No, I don’t believe that...No, I don’t believe that at all.” See mn_1.2 for this discussion.

¹⁴¹ For a discussion of reduplication and O’odham plurals, see Jane H. Hill and Ofelia Zepeda, “Tohono O’odham (Papago) Plurals,” *Anthropological Linguistics* 40:1 (1998), 1-42.

In essence, much of the Christian practices incorporated within O’odham traditions are about maintaining proper relations, some intimate, some more distant, between O’odham and these powerful entities that are associated with Christianity: saints and devils. However, as previously noted, these entities associated with Christianity are also classified with various other entities that comprise the desert landscape and should not be understood apart from the larger O’odham context. All of these powerful beings, whether artificially classified by outsiders as “Native” or “Christian,” are tied to particular places on O’odham land. All of these entities are decidedly inhabitants of *this* world, embedded in O’odham homelands – whether saints in churches, devils in nearby mountains, or deceased O’odham in village cemeteries or at roadside memorials marking the places of sudden, violent death.¹⁴² In short, O’odham have embedded – or emplaced – Christianity within their ancestral and conceptual landscapes.

Landscapes of Movement

How do O’odham actually live within and move through these landscapes? Since landscape studies sometimes run the risk of being too static, motion and movement have been at the forefront of landscape studies.¹⁴³ As Nancy Louise Frey noted in her study of

¹⁴² For discussions of roadside memorials and violent death, see David Lee Kozak, *The Cult of the Dead: Neocolonialism, Violent Mortality, and Religious Change* (Tempe, Ariz: Arizona State University Department of Anthropology Thesis, 1990); David Kozak and Camillus Lopez, “The Tohono O’odham Shrine Complex: Memorializing the Locations of Violent Death,” *New York Folklore* 17:1-2 (1991), 1-20; David Lee Kozak, “Dying Badly: Violent Death and Religious Change among the Tohono O’odham,” *Omega* 23:3 (1991), 207-216; David Kozak, “Reifying the Body through the Medicalization of Violent Death,” *Human Organization* 53:1 (1994), 48-54.

¹⁴³ Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso, eds. *Senses of Place* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1996); Eric Hirsch and Michael O’Hanlon, eds., *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Space and Place* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Christopher Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths and Monuments* (Oxford: Berg, 1994).

pilgrims on and off the road on their way to Santiago de Compostella, anthropologists have long used the notion of “landscape” as an ethnographic “framing convention.”¹⁴⁴ Moreover, Frey notes that within pilgrimage studies, “landscape and sacred geography tend to be conflated. Rather than look at how pilgrims experience and understand sacred geography, the focus tends to be on the social meaning of dramatic features associated with the sacred center, as a nonproblematized feature of the sacred whole, or as a backdrop to movement.”¹⁴⁵ In contradistinction to these positions, Frey maintains that “Landscape is not only a ‘backdrop’ but also a central part of pilgrims’ experiences.”¹⁴⁶ To rephrase Frey’s words for the purposes of this study, landscape is not merely a “backdrop” – as some other scholars might have it both O’odham studies and pilgrimage studies – but also an agent that actively construct persons while persons dialectically produce places, or landscapes, both by thinking of them and actually moving through them.¹⁴⁷ Rather than conceiving of “landscape” as a “backdrop” to movement, this work follows Christopher Tilley, who argues that it is imperative to understand how landscapes are experienced, how they mark people, and how they are socially produced.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Nancy Louise Frey, *Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1998), 264-265, n. 4.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 265, n. 7.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ For an example of “landscape” as merely a “backdrop” for action and movement in O’odham studies, see Donald Bahr, *How Mockingbirds Are: O’odham Ritual Orations* (Albany: State University of New York Press), 2011: 120; and for an example of “landscape” as merely a “backdrop” to movement in pilgrimage studies, see Simon Coleman and John Elsner, *Pilgrimage: Past and Present in the World Religions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 212.

¹⁴⁸ Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape*.

Because this study engages dialogical emergence of place and person, the type of landscapes on which it focuses might be called “landscapes of movement.”¹⁴⁹ Here, walking is the primary movement across O’odham landscapes being studied.¹⁵⁰ Titling the dissertation *Walking to Magdalena* highlights this movement as crucial to understanding indigenous landscapes or cosmologies that are actually lived in.¹⁵¹ In so doing, this work perpetuates the trend that Gustavo Benavides noted: that gerunds dominate the titles of English language scholarly monographs in the field of religious studies.¹⁵² Insofar as these gerunds emphasize process as well as product, this trend suits the purposes of this study. Walking, then, is the principal process – through not the only process – that this study aims to highlight, through which O’odham become inextricably connected with their landscape.

The category of “landscape,” of course, carries multiple layers of meaning, suggesting among other things a way of seeing the world.¹⁵³ Hence, the notion of

¹⁴⁹ James E. Snead, Clark L. Erickson, and J. Andrew Darling, eds., *Landscapes of Movement: Trails, Paths, and Roads in Anthropological Perspective* (Pittsburgh: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2009).

¹⁵⁰ For movement of O’odham Feasts of Saint Francis, rather than the movement of O’odham to the Saint Francis in Magdalena, see Gary Paul Nabhan, “The Moveable O’odham Feast of San Francisco,” *Native Peoples* 4:2 (1991), 28-34; for the understudied St. Francis feast *Cu:wĩ Ge:sk*, also known as “Rabbit Falls Down” and *San Francisquito*, see John Schweitzer and Robert K. Thomas, “Fiesta of St. Francis at San Francisquito, Sonora,” *Kiva* 18:1-2 (1952), 1-8.

¹⁵¹ Peter Nabokov, *Indian Running: Native American History and Tradition* (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1981); Thomas Buckley, *Standing Ground: Yurok Indian Spirituality, 1850-1990* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002).

¹⁵² Gustavo Benavides, “The Tyranny of the Gerund in the Study of Religion,” *Temi E Problemi Della Storia Delle Religioni Nell’europa Contemporanea*, Giulia Sfameni Gasparro, ed., (Cosenza: Edizioni Lionello Giordano, 2002), 53-66.

¹⁵³ Denis Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (London: Croom Helm, 1984); Denis Cosgrove, “Landscapes and Myths, Gods and Humans,” *Landscape: Politics and Perspectives*, Barbara Bender, ed., (Oxford: Berg, 1993), 281-305.

“landscape,” like that of “place” (see this chapter), denotes a social product. In this usage, landscape – particularly insofar as it may be linked to notions of the Sublime – may be understood as an historically and ideologically conditioned aesthetic, or way of seeing, the product of what Charles Lock has called “the Protestant optic” in which an optic of distance is privileged over proximity and sensory engagement.¹⁵⁴ This work strives to avoid the pitfalls of such a worldview. Here, the focus on movement has the potential to subvert the “landscape” concept’s potential to be nothing more than a particular way of seeing.

Following from this concern with averting the Protestant optic, the focus on walking is central to any understanding of movement through a given landscape, or better yet, “landscapes of movement.” Landscapes, then, need not be static vistas, particularly for an ethnographer who is more engaged in participation than observation. As James Clifford declared, the “ethnographer is no longer a (worldly) traveler visiting (local) natives.... Everyone’s on the move, and has been for centuries: dwelling-in-travel.”¹⁵⁵ Clifford redescribes the problematic figure of the ethnographic “informant” as a “traveler.” Furthermore, Clifford on the one hand somewhat jokingly asserts that “anthropologists tend to be homebodies abroad,” but on the other hand he also asserts that “[t]he people studied by anthropologists have seldom been homebodies....

¹⁵⁴ Charles Lock, “Bowing Down to Wood and Stone: One Way to be a Pilgrim,” *Pilgrim Voices: Narrative and Authorship in Christian Pilgrimage*, Simon Coleman and John Elsner, eds., (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2002), 130.

¹⁵⁵ James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1997), 2.

‘informants’ first appear as natives; they emerge as travelers.”¹⁵⁶ Following Clifford’s lead, this dissertation too “begins with this assumption of movement.”¹⁵⁷

Place and Place-Making

Having outlined the methods and data in the introductory chapter, this chapter will discuss the key theoretical terms used in this study, addressing the category of place, the category of person, and any relation between the two categories. The category of “place” is often defined in opposition to the category of “space.” Simply put, whereas space is abstract and homogeneous, place is concrete and particular. Further reduced to its most simplistic and constructivist formulation, the difference between place and space might be sketched in the following formula:

$$\text{Place} = \text{Space} + \text{Meaning}$$

The phenomenological philosopher Edward S. Casey surveys the debate between “space” and “place” dating back to the Greek philosophers.¹⁵⁸ As Casey characterizes the debate, the central question has been: do humans make (ontologically primary and meaningless) spaces into (constructed and signifying) places, or do places generate our perception of space? The primary tension then, according to Casey, lies between these constructivist and phenomenological positions. W. H. Poteat, also a phenomenological philosopher, similarly asserts that the notions of “space” and “place” are radically

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 19, 22.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, 2.

¹⁵⁸ For a brief survey of this literature, see Edward S. Casey, “How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time: Phenomenological Prolegomena,” *Senses of Place*, Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso, eds. (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1996), 13-52.

opposed to one another, declaring, “Persons have *places*.”¹⁵⁹ Poteat contends that place is essential to humanity and territoriality, both of which are undermined by the concept of space:

Space can never belong to me, not I to it; but ‘places’ can belong to me and I to them...To be of no *place* is therefore to lack the grounds of becoming a person; and to have no ‘place’ is to lack the minimum conditions for remaining a person....To think of oneself as a thing in space is to take oneself to be a mere thing....To be deprived of a place is to become depersonalized.¹⁶⁰

In Poteat’s interpretation, persons require places and places require persons.

But what precisely are places and how are they made? If place is space transformed by human acts of meaning making – such as walking – then one can begin to conceive of place as simultaneously encompassing both concrete and particular places, as well as in a variety of more expansive notions of place. Building on the elasticity of place, Anne Feldhaus suggests that a region – such as Maharashtra, the focus of her study on pilgrimage, connected places, and geographical imagination – may be considered a kind of place. “In such a usage,” Feldhaus contends, “a region is simply a large place.”¹⁶¹ Feldhaus acknowledges that other scholars might resist the notion of conceiving of a region as merely a large place, specifically noting that the philosopher Edward Casey prefers to think of a region as a set of places connected to one another rather than a large place. Following Feldhaus’s lead in extending the notion of place to include the category of region as “simply a large place” as well as a set or series of sets of discrete yet

¹⁵⁹ W. H. Poteat, “Persons and Places: Paradigms in Communication,” in *Art and Religion as Communication*, James Wadell and F. W. Dillistone, eds. (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1974), 185.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 186-189.

¹⁶¹ Anne Feldhaus, *Connected Places: Region, Pilgrimage, and Geographical Imagination in India* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 5.

“connected places,” this study maximally expands the notion of place to include cosmology, which is used here more or less synonymously with sense of place. Such an expansion of the category of place is not unprecedented. For example, Feldhaus argues “a sense of place is formative of one’s cosmology and basic orientation in the world.”¹⁶² Moreover, to speak of the cosmos, or a region, as a place is not merely an academic abstraction. Addressing the relation between pilgrimage and the production of regional consciousness in Maharashtra, Feldhaus argues:

In most pilgrimages in South Asia, the pilgrims enact their conviction that they *can* move through a region by in fact *doing* so. At the same time, they reinforce the same conviction for those who, though they remain at home, are aware of the pilgrims’ journeys. Movement through an area with one’s own body, or a clear realization of the possibility of such movement, is a condition for being able to imagine the area as a region in *any* coherent sense.”¹⁶³

The same thing could very well be said for O’odham who journey to Magdalena: that they enact their conviction that they can move through their indigenous territory by in fact doing so. It is no surprise, then, that on the road to Magdalena the declaration, “this is our *jewed*” – that is, our “earth,” or our “land,” could often be heard. O’odham continue to be able to think of Magdalena as existing within O’odham territory, both by actually walking to Magdalena themselves and praying in their own homes for their loved ones who are making the journey for the people. Although Magdalena now lies outside of any territory recognized as being within the jurisdiction of contemporary O’odham people, the notion that Magdalena continues to exist as O’odham territory in any coherent

¹⁶² Ibid, 6.

¹⁶³ Ibid, 28; see also, Anne Feldhaus, “Walking and Thinking,” *Mārga: Ways of Liberation, Empowerment, and Social Change in Maharashtra*, E. Naito, I. Shima, and H. Kotani, eds. (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors, 2008), 441-453.

sense is made possible through the actual physical movement of walking to Magdalena (see chapter four), imagining journeys to Magdalena through song (see chapter two), and staffs, ribbons, and saints that evoke the power and presence of Magdalena in the everyday lives of O’odham (see chapter three).

Few O’odham consultants have ever invoked or discussed the category of place. However, one consultant, Verlon Carlos Jose – Chairman of the Chukut Kuk District, the district that runs most of the distance along the Tohono O’odham Nation’s shared southern boundary line on the U.S.-Mexico international border – takes an explicitly pluralist and relativist stance on place. Even on the road to Magdalena, he often encourages O’odham to make pilgrimages to destinations other than Magdalena. He has also made these other journeys as well and yet he also goes to Magdalena. During one conversation, he mentioned that there are multiple groups and individuals who walk to a variety of locations across the Tohono O’odham Nation in honor of Saint Francis. “That’s what I’ve always said: ‘We don’t necessarily have to go to *Mali:na*; we can go here. We can walk to any church here to make our *manda*, to make our commitment, for our prayers, to humble ourselves, to do that.’”¹⁶⁴ These remarks are perplexing since the pilgrimage to Magdalena is clearly very important to Verlon. When asked what he thought about “place,” and whether particular places are unique, special, and different from other places, or if places are more or less interchangeable in certain ways, his reply was simple: “When it comes to place, place is what you make it and how you make it....You talk about ‘place’: places are important, but a place is what you make of it.”¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ vcj_2.1

¹⁶⁵ vcj_2.1

As Verlon's response to the query about place demonstrates, interest in O'odham place-making is not merely of interest to academics.

The municipality of Magdalena in Sonora, Mexico provides a good example for considering the difference between place as unique and place as interchangeable in some way. Many O'odham travel to Magdalena to visit with their Saint Francis, particularly around the saint's day on October 4. However, there are also several rival destinations for O'odham with their own Saint Francis. Both Mission San Xavier de Bac near Tucson and San Francisquito – meaning “Little Saint Francis,” the Spanish name for *Cu:wĩ Gesk*, or “Rabbit Falls Down,” an O'odham village in Sonora near the international border – have their own rival fiestas for Saint Francis. Moreover, the Tohono O'odham Nation also has a movable feast of Saint Francis that rotates each year across the eleven districts of the nation.¹⁶⁶ This means that each year there are no fewer than three rival destinations for O'odham to travel to in addition to, or in lieu of, traveling to Magdalena. On top of all of this, there is a village in the Baboquivari District of the Tohono O'odham Nation named *Ali Mali:na*, or “Little Magdalena.” Each of these places effectively aspire to be replicas of Magdalena, vying for its prestige, power, authority, and authenticity. As James Griffith and other scholars have previously shown, some O'odham claim that these rivals of Magdalena are superior to Magdalena because they have the “real” Saint Francis.¹⁶⁷ However, these other journeys and pilgrimage destinations are not the focus of this study.

¹⁶⁶ Gary Paul Nabhan, “The Moveable O'odham Feast of San Francisco,” *Native Peoples* 4:2 (1991).

¹⁶⁷ James S. Griffith, *Beliefs and Holy Places: A Spiritual Geography of the Pimeria Alta* (Tucson and London: University of Arizona Press, 1992); George H. Williamson, “Why the Pilgrims Come,” *Kiva* 16:1/2 (1950); John Schweitzer and Robert K. Thomas, “Fiesta of St. Francis at San Francisquito, Sonora,” *The Kiva* 18:1/2 (1952).

Although each of these might warrant an independent study or even a comparative study at a later date, these other places seem to derive their authority from Magdalena in one way or another. As Feldhaus argues in the Maharashtrian context in India where the replication of so called “holy places” is a common phenomenon,

[E]ven when the ostensible claim is that the nearby place being praised is equal or superior to the distant place in terms of which it is praised, the person making the claim implicitly admits that the distant place is in fact superior. For that place is the one *in terms of which* the praise is formulated. The distant place is the measure against which the nearer place is to be tested, the truly famous place whose fame the other seeks to borrow.¹⁶⁸

In the O’odham context, these other places invoke Magdalena as the standard against which they should be measured when some O’odham claim that one or more of these other places are equal or superior to Magdalena in some way, though of course some O’odham explicitly disagree with this.

Making “Real People”

Miguel Aguilera argues that Western scholars have never had a firm grasp on indigenous worldviews.¹⁶⁹ This is certainly true for O’odham. However, as guideposts Aguilera suggests that indigenous “cosmologies are more about a daily social way of life revolving around conceptions of self, personhood, and sense of place relating to what is both visible and invisible.”¹⁷⁰ Although Aguilera made these comments addressing the Mesoamerican context in which he works, the same may be said of indigenous

¹⁶⁸ Feldhaus, *Connected Places*, 184.

¹⁶⁹ Miguel Angel Astor-Aguilera, *The Maya World of Communicating Objects: Quadripartite Crosses, Trees, and Stones* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press), 2010: 2.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

worldviews in the Americas more generally, as Aguilera argues concerning Native American relational worldviews.¹⁷¹ Indeed, this is why the focus here is on such a mundane activity as walking, in relation to senses of place and the production of “real people.”

In earlier stages of this work, the intention was to accept Aguilera’s challenge: “Native American personhood concepts should not simply be an aside to our studies. At this point in time they need to take central importance.”¹⁷² In turn, Raymond Fogelson shared Aguilera’s sentiments earlier, when he foretold that “[there] will be new field investigations in which systematic study of self and person concepts becomes a central rather than a peripheral concern.”¹⁷³ Therefore, the plan had been to treat the category of personhood – alongside the category of place – as the central categories of this study. In particular, the study has the potential to develop Aguilera’s concept of “tethering,” a process through which persons, places (and objects) become associated with one another.¹⁷⁴

However, the burgeoning literature on “personhood” has not gone unchallenged. Most significantly, Tod Swanson contends that “the word ‘person’ carries with it a whole Christian and European philosophical history suggesting an individual of a unique class of beings who descend from a single pair, are equal, and of infinite worth because they

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 183-245.

¹⁷² Ibid., 204.

¹⁷³ Raymond D. Fogelson, “Person, Self, and Identity: Some Anthropological Retrospects, Circumspects, and Prospects,” *Psychosocial Theories of the Self*, Benjamin Lee, ed. (New York and London: Plenum Press), 1982: 93.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 206-211.

and only they are made in the image of God.”¹⁷⁵ From this perspective, it is impractical to permit the category of personhood to take central importance without carefully working out the similarities and differences between O’odham and European religious and moral histories. Otherwise, as Jasper Oosten argues, “one is applying a Western concept to a non-Western culture....[and] one has to admit that one is not really interested in other cultures.”¹⁷⁶ Oosten correctly assumes that scholars may be better off relinquishing this academic category than admit this.

To the limited extent that an earlier focus on personhood remains in this present work, the focus is almost entirely on anthropocentric models of O’odham maturity and maturation without going into uses of personhood that extend to other species, like A. Irving Hallowell’s classic “other-than-human-person.”¹⁷⁷ The only exception to this rule is the chapter on staffs (see chapter three), though the analysis of these and other sticks will demonstrate that these staffs also directly relate to anthropocentric models of O’odham maturation. To use the concepts developed by Beth Conklin and Lynn M. Morgan, instead of focusing on “structural-relational” models of personhood that might

¹⁷⁵ Tod Swanson, “Singing to Estranged Lovers: Runa Relations to Plants in the Ecuadorian Amazon,” *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 3:1 (2009), 62.

¹⁷⁶ Jasper J. Oosten, “A Few Critical Remarks on the Concept of Person,” *Concepts of Person in Religion and Thought*, Hans G. Kippenberg, Yme B. Kuiper, Andy F. Sanders, eds., (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1990), 32.

¹⁷⁷ A. Irving Hallowell, “Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View,” *Culture in History: Essays in Honor of Paul Radin*, Stanley Diamond ed., (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 18-52; reprinted in Dennis Tedlock and Barbara Tedlock, eds., *Teachings from the American Earth: Indian Religion and Philosophy* (Liveright Press: New York, 1975), 139-178. In the O’odham context, ethnobiologist Gary Nabhan frequently uses Hallowell’s category in his own work to talk about other species. To cite one example of this, Nabhan contents that O’odham songs and stories “reflect the larger, other-than-human landscape, one intrinsic to [O’odham] literature, music, or ways of healing.” Gary Paul Nabhan, *Cultures of Habitat: On Nature, Culture, and Story* (Washington: Counterpoint, 1997), 11.

include other species, I am interested in anthropocentric “processual-relational” models of personhood, which Sarah Lamb has called “the making and unmaking of persons.”¹⁷⁸

The most thorough academic model of O’odham life stages comes from David Kozak’s unpublished M.A. thesis. Kozak’s model of O’odham life stages directly relates to O’odham models of personhood because distinguishing between life stages that must be accomplished suggests that persons must gradually be made, or produced, rather than merely born as such. His model is reproduced below.

<u>ali</u>	pre-toddler infant (from birth to approximately two years of age; prior to learning how to walk and talk) Literal translation: baby boy (Noun)
<u>ceoj</u>	child (from two to approximately nine years of age) Literal translation: boy (Noun)
<u>cehia/wiappoi</u>	youth (pubescent child, teen years; <u>cehia</u> = female, <u>wiappoi</u> = male)
<u>ke:li/oks</u>	adult (a person with/without children and/or has achieved a special feat; <u>ke:li</u> = male, <u>oks</u> = female) Literal translation: <u>ke:li</u> = an adult male; the male of any animal; <u>oks</u> = an adult female; a lady or a woman (Nouns)
<u>wi:kol</u> grandchildren)	an elder or older person (someone with great-grandchildren) Literal translation: one’s relative of the great grand-parent generation (Noun) ¹⁷⁹

In addition to these four life stages outlined by Kozak, Ruth Underhill discusses *siakam*, an O’odham notion of maturity pertaining to “ripening” or “ripeness,” which might be considered a subset of *ke:li*, *oks*, and *wi:kol*. Ruth Underhill translates *siakam* as “ripe man,” and Dean Saxton et al. translate the term as “hero,” or “one who has

¹⁷⁸ Beth A. Conklin and Lynn M. Morgan, “Babies, Bodies, and the Production of Personhood in North America and a Native Amazonian Society,” *Ethos* 24:4 (1996), 657-694; Sarah Lamb, “The Making and Unmaking of Persons: Notes on Aging and Gender in North India,” *Ethos* 25:3 (1997), 279-302.

¹⁷⁹ David Lee Kozak, *The Cult of the Dead: Neocolonialism, Violent Mortality, and Religious Change* (Tempe: Arizona State University Department of Anthropology Thesis, 1990).

endured.”¹⁸⁰ Donald Bahr translates *siakam* as “brave men” or “war hero.” Saxton et al. translate *si* as “real, genuine; ultimate; of good character; precise, very,” so if *O’odham* means something like “people,” then *siakam* means something like “real people,” those ripened individuals who are the physical embodiment of O’odhamness.¹⁸¹ For example, Maria Chona, the subject of Underhill’s *Papago Woman* is one such portrait of a “ripe” woman, whose life story tells of her maturation and movements within the O’odham desert landscape.¹⁸² Like Chona, Frances Manuel was known as “a person who has traveled all over.”¹⁸³ Alternatively, rather than using the language of “ripening” or “ripeness,” Joseph Giff – an O’odham singer from St. John’s Village – used the language of “flowering” found in the Blue Swallow songs that he sings. Giff explains, “[h]ere [in the Blue Swallow song] where it says “my body flowers” [“*ñ-cu:kug hiosim*”] what it means is when one really sings with his heart [*si e-i:bdagkaj ñei*] then his body becomes beautiful similar to flowering all over. If something looks very nice, if it looks very desirable, we say it flowers [*s-hiosig*].”¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁰ Ruth Underhill, *Papago Indian Religion* (New York: AMS Press, 1969 [1946]), 20; Dean Saxton, Lucille Saxton, Susie Enos, *Dictionary: Tohono O’odham/Pima to English-English to Tohono O’odham/Pima* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1983), 54.

¹⁸¹ Bahr also translates *O’odham* as “true humans” or “true people.” Bahr, “The Oral Literatures of Small Nations,” 211; Frank Russell also discusses *Si’atcokam*, which he translates as “Examining Physicians,” noting that this is the most powerful of three classes of O’odham “medicine-men.” Frank Russell, *The Pima Indians* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1980 [1908]), 256, 258-262; Elsie Clews Parsons records this title as *sai’chukam*. Elsie Clews Parsons, “Notes on the Pima, 1926,” *American Anthropologist* 30:3 (1928), 461.

¹⁸² Ruth Underhill, *Papago Woman* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1979 [1936]); that Maria Chona’s sense of place shapes her narrative in significant and intimate ways has been previously noted in Gretchen M. Bataille and Kathleen Mullen Sands, *American Indian Women: Telling Their Lives* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 49-50.

¹⁸³ Manuel and Neff, *Desert Indian Woman*, xxxvii.

¹⁸⁴ Joseph Giff, “Pima Blue Swallow Songs of Gratitude,” Donald M. Bahr, trans., *Speaking, Singing and Teaching: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Language Variation – Proceedings of the Eighth Annual*

Underhill describes four procedures through which males might progress from one stage to another: killing an eagle, going on the salt pilgrimage, encountering a powerful spirit in a dream thereby acquiring songs and perhaps healing power, as well as the act of killing an enemy.¹⁸⁵ Dean Saxton et al. suggests a similar model in which four degrees of manhood were attained through “killing a small animal” (often called *ban*, literally meaning “coyote” though not necessarily referring to an actual coyote), going on the salt pilgrimage (*onamed*), “meeting an animal or bird with power in a dream or vision,” and “killing an enemy tribesman” (*o:b*).¹⁸⁶ One of the contributions of this dissertation on walking to Magdalena to the literature on O’odham processes of “ripening,” “flowering,” or maturation is to suggest that in this context the walk to Magdalena should be considered a process through which O’odham make mature persons.

Place and Person

Haunted places are the only ones people can live in.
- Michel de Certeau¹⁸⁷

People are always being watched. They are watched by other living people. They are watched by dead people. They are watched by all creatures with wills.... All the creatures with wills are called *h̄majkam* [hemajkam]—“they are just like people”....All adults must be careful not

Southwestern Areal Language and Linguistics Workshop, Florence Barkin and Elizabeth Brandt, eds., (Tempe: Arizona State University Anthropological Research Papers No. 20, 1980), 136-137.

¹⁸⁵ Ruth Underhill, *Singing for Power: The Song Magic of the Papago Indians of Southern Arizona* (Tucson and London: University of Arizona Press, 1993 [1938]); Underhill, *Papago Indian Religion*; Ruth Underhill, *Social Organization of the Papago Indians* (New York: AMS Press, 1969 [1939]).

¹⁸⁶ Saxton, Saxton and Enos, *Dictionary*, 122-123.

¹⁸⁷ De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 108.

to offend any himajkam. People are also himajkam; the people living at some place are called the himajkam from there.

- Don Bahr¹⁸⁸

The conjunction of the categories of place and person is not without precedent.¹⁸⁹

Keith Basso contends, “what people make of their places is closely connected to what they make of themselves as members of society and inhabitants of the earth, and while the two activities may be separable in principle, they are deeply joined in practice.... We *are*, in a sense, the place-worlds we imagine.”¹⁹⁰ Or, as put more briefly by Feld and Basso, “as people fashion places, so, too, do they fashion themselves.”¹⁹¹ The production, manufacture, or making of place and person, then, are coterminous projects pursued in tandem. Moreover, Feld and Basso’s quotation above, can and should be inverted to state that as people fashion themselves, they also fashion places (for more, see chapter four on walking). Similarly, Feldhaus notes that “awareness of *where* one is (or where one comes from) can become an important element in understanding *who* one is: it can become a vital aspect of a person’s identity.”¹⁹² Likewise, in the context of the pilgrimage to

¹⁸⁸ Donald M. Bahr, “Santa Rosa, Arizona,” (1964), 59. Unpublished manuscript in possession of the author.

¹⁸⁹ Though other scholars use the categories of “place” and “person” somewhat differently than I do, see Roderick L. Stirrat, “Place and Person in Sinhala Catholic Pilgrimage,” *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*, John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow, eds. (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), 122-136; and W. H. Poteat, “Persons and Places: Paradigms in Communication,” in *Art and Religion as Communication*, James Wadell and F. W. Dillistone, eds. (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1974).

¹⁹⁰ Keith H. Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 7.

¹⁹¹ Feld and Basso, *Senses of Place*, 11.

¹⁹² Feldhaus, *Connected Places*, 7.

Magdalena, where one has been (or not), and how one gets there (or not), are significant in the ongoing process of producing O’odham persons.

This chapter has previously addressed how O’odham make persons, but it has not yet begun to discuss how O’odham make places – or better yet, how places make mature persons. Living in, moving through, and interacting with places, people are in turn shaped by these places and the people that are sometimes associated with them. On one journey, an O’odham man sang songs that were unusual in that the words were sung in ordinary, spoken O’odham instead of the “song language” that is difficult for even fluent speakers of O’odham to understand. In particular, two lines from the song are notable:

Mali:na, Mali:na
San Flansi:sko ki:

Mali:na, of course, is how the Spanish word Magdalena is usually rendered, through a syllable reduction in O’odham. *San Flansi:sko ki:* might be translated as “Saint Francis’s house,” or “where Saint Francis lives.” The pairing of these lines suggests their equivalence; or, in other words, the person of Saint Francis is associated with the town and church of Magdalena, both of which are in turn associated with Saint Francis. Therefore, when O’odham say, “I’m going to *Mali:na*,” everyone knows that the speaker is referring to making a visit to Saint Francis, who is usually lying in a side chapel of the Church of Santa María Magdalena in the Sonoran town of Magdalena de Kino.¹⁹³

By attending to O’odham conceptions and representations of places and how they produce mature persons, the intention is to respond to Bahr’s concern that studies of indigenous cosmologies too often neglect the “characters” that inhabit and act within this

¹⁹³ Credit must be given to Eileen Oktavec for making this point before me. Eileen Oktavec, *Answered Prayers: Miracles and Milagros along the Border* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1995), xxi.

world – or as Bahr puts it, “what the *persons*...are like and how they behave” without assuming, as Bahr does, that O’odham landscapes or cosmos “are just places for characters to act.”¹⁹⁴

In the final pages of his signature work *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sickness*, Bahr acknowledges that Mircea Eliade’s three-part cosmology, or “shamanic geography” (this world, and the spiritual worlds above and below), does not fit well with the O’odham cosmology that Bahr elicited from his principal collaborator, Juan Gregorio, whose cosmology, according to Bahr, is decidedly “this-worldly.”¹⁹⁵ Despite Bahr’s admission of the limitations of working within the Eliadean paradigm, other scholars such as David Kozak and David Lopez have largely adopted this same framework uncritically without noting Bahr’s assertion that the model does not fit the data.¹⁹⁶ This may be why Bahr bemoans:

I confess to a weariness about studies of the cosmos – the sacred directions, the earth, sky, and underworld, and so on. To me, those are just places for characters to act, and I prefer the characters’ actions over the places. It is a personal preference and I would surely not rule out further attention to the cosmo-visions of Native Americans. I do feel that overattention to that leaves out this other aspect of stories, and orations, namely what the *persons* (godly or mortal, human or human-animal) are like and how they behave.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Bahr, *How Mockingbirds Are*, 120.

¹⁹⁵ Bahr, et al., *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sickness*, 279.

¹⁹⁶ For example, Kozak and Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*.

¹⁹⁷ Bahr, *How Mockingbirds Are*, 120.

The goal here, then, is to establish a framework that might satisfy Bahr for attending to place without neglecting persons. Moreover, what O’odham have *made of* Christianity should be understood within these cosmologies, rather than apart from them.¹⁹⁸

Walking to Magdalena follows what some scholars have called “the spatial turn.”¹⁹⁹ Following Michel Foucault’s critique of the devaluation of space and hyperinflation of time, in which “Space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile” and “time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic,” critical geographer Edward Soja has forcefully shown how most disciplines in the humanities and social sciences have persistently marginalized space in favor of time.²⁰⁰ Soja calls this trend “historicism,” which he defines as “an overdeveloped historical contextualization of social life and social theory that actively submerges and peripheralizes the geographical or spatial imagination.”²⁰¹ Instead, Soja urges scholars to recognize that space is agentic – it acts upon individuals (that is, places make people) just as it is shaped by their practices (people make places). Within such a framework place is agentic and people are emplaced, with each acting upon the other. Places make mature persons, or rather disciplined journeys make persons mature, as people move between meaningful places. Places themselves are capable of calling people to them. Both the

¹⁹⁸ For one example of compartmentalizing “Native” and “Christian” O’odham traditions, see Ruth M. Underhill, Donald M. Bahr, Baptisto Lopez, Jose Pancho, and David Lopez, *Rainhouse & Ocean: Speeches for the Papago Year* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997 [1979]), 5-11.

¹⁹⁹ Barney Warf and Santa Arias, eds., *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008).

²⁰⁰ Michel Foucault, “Questions on Geography,” *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings: 1972-1977*, Colin Gordon, ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 70.

²⁰¹ Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London and New York: Verso, 1989), 15.

production of mature persons and place-making, then, are ongoing and unfinished O’odham projects.

“The spatial turn,” however, is perhaps less revolutionary for the discipline of religious studies than it is for other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. No doubt, this is due to Eliade’s complex legacy for contemporary scholars of religion. As Manuel Vásquez has recently noted, “[b]y introducing a cyclical notion of time, time as the eternal return to mythical and pristine origins, as a ‘continual’ or ‘atemporal present,’ Eliade effectively immunizes religious studies against the bias toward time that has led to the neglect of space in the social sciences.”²⁰² Although Eliade’s focus on the spatial dimensions of religious experience corrects the biases and excesses of historicism, this comes at the cost of dehistoricizing and decontextualizing his data. As Vásquez argues, Eliade’s inoculation of religious studies against historicism comes at too great a cost:

Eliade has left unchallenged the untenable dichotomy between space and time, merely switching the duality around, privileging space, particularly the foundational center, against the corrosive power of historicity and change. The result is an essentialist theory of religion that flattens the diversity of religious phenomena across history and cultures. Despite Eliade’s remarkable erudition, his history of religions does not seek to provide fully contextualized analyses of changing forms of religious emplacement and materiality. Instead, Eliade summons a myriad of religious practices as surface expressions of underlying transhistorical or supra-historical patterns that are endlessly reenacted. This search for deep, universal ‘Platonic forms’ flies in the face of his own anti-reductionist efforts.²⁰³

Instead of following Eliade in defending religion from “the terror of history,” the intention is to follow Soja in the goal of articulating “a practical theoretical consciousness

²⁰² Manuel Vásquez, *More than Belief: A Materialist Theory of Religion* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 267.

²⁰³ Ibid., 268.

that sees the lifeworld of being creatively located not only in the making of history but also the construction of human geographies, the social production of space and the restless formation and reformation of geographical landscapes,” so that “social being [is] actively emplaced in space *and* time in an explicitly historical *and* geographical contextualization.”²⁰⁴

Movement in general, and walking in particular, becomes that which mediates time and space, making landscapes places that are actually lived in, though this is not an original claim. Arjun Appadurai introduced the term “ethnoscape” to draw attention to the “imagined world” of transnational and intercultural human movements across the landscape.²⁰⁵ Building on Appadurai’s theme, Elizabeth McAlister suggested the term of “religio-scapes” to understand “the subjective maps (and attendant theologies) of diasporic communities.”²⁰⁶ Similarly, Tweed describes religions as dynamic “sacrosapes”: “[w]hatever else religions do,” Tweed writes, “they move across time and space. They are not static. And they have effects. They leave traces. They leave trails.”²⁰⁷ Following Michel de Certeau, Tweed redescribes religions as “spatial practices” through which people “make homes and cross boundaries.”²⁰⁸ Moreover, Tweed argues

[R]eligions are always-contested and ever-changing maps that orient devotees as they move spatially and temporally....Religions, then, survey

²⁰⁴ Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*, 11; emphasis in original.

²⁰⁵ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 33.

²⁰⁶ Elizabeth McAlister, “The Madonna of 115th Street Revisited: Vodou and Haitian Catholicism in the Age of Transnationalism,” *Gatherings in Diaspora: Religious Communities and the New Immigration*, Stephen Warner and Judith Wittner, eds., (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 156.

²⁰⁷ Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling*, 61-62.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 73.

the terrain and make cognitive maps – and sometimes even graphic representations of space. In other words...they situate the devout in the body, the home, the homeland, and the cosmos. Religions position women and men in natural terrain and social space.²⁰⁹

The Founding of the O'odham Cosmos: Making a Place for "Real People"

If the world is to be lived in, it must be founded....settling in a territory is equivalent to founding a world.

- Mircea Eliade²¹⁰

[O'odham] were both the same as and different from the Hohokam...the Hohokam conquest was internal and fraternal, if not fratricidal, something like a civil war.

- Donald Bahr²¹¹

Contemporary O'odham sometimes refer to themselves as *Wu:şkam Hemajkam*, or "the people who came out/emerged." This self-identification stands in distinction to *Hohokam*, or *Huhugam O'odham*, which "finished people-like-us."²¹² While there is no consensus regarding who the Hohokam are in relation to contemporary O'odham within either O'odham or academic communities, the crucial distinction seems to be that they similar to, and yet somehow different from, today's O'odham.²¹³ The word *huhugam*

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 73-74.

²¹⁰ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, Willard R. Trask, trans., (San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt Brace, 1987 [1959]), 22, 47; emphasis in original.

²¹¹ Donald Bahr, Juan Smith, William Smith Allison, and Julian Hayden, *The Short Swift Time of Gods on Earth: The Hohokam Chronicles* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1994), 1-2.

²¹² Donald M. Bahr, "O'odham Traditions about the Hohokam," *The Hohokam Millennium*, Suzanne K. Fish and Paul R. Fish, eds., (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007), 125.

²¹³ Donald M. Bahr, "Who Were the Hohokam?: The Evidence from Pima-Papago Myths," *Ethnohistory* 18:3 (1979), 245-66; Julian D. Hayden, "Of Hohokam Origins and Other Matters," *American Antiquity* 35:1 (1970), 87-93; Edward Spicer, "The Papago Indians," *The Kiva* 6:6 (1941), 21-24; J. Alden Mason, "The Papago Migration Legend," *Journal of American Folk-Lore* 34 (1921), 254-268; Anna Moore Shaw, *Pima Indian Legends* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1972 [1968]), 27-28.

means “something that is all gone,” which Danny Lopez explains can refer to anything that is gone, finished, or disappeared, such as food after a good feast.²¹⁴

On one occasion, Simon Lopez explained who contemporary O’odham are as *Wu:škam Hemajkam* – how they killed the Hohokam, drove them into the Ocean (where they perhaps now reside), and settled in their homelands, an area that is significantly larger than their present land holdings on both sides of the United States-Mexico border. However, this “settling,” or “founding,” as Eliade might have euphemistically called it, was nothing short of a violent conquest, which Bahr likens to a fraternal or fratricidal civil war. When Simon Lopez narrated this history, he explained, “That’s why they call us *Wu:škam*. *Wu:škam Hemajkam*. The I’ittoi brought us out there and spread us out to start war, killing these *Hohokam*.”²¹⁵ Simon went on, stating that I’ittoi “Took them *in the Ocean*,” where he killed them in the water.

SL: And that’s how they started living here, all over here. And the people started making *their living* here on this *Jeweł* [earth, or land]. And that’s how our understanding *is*. Now we’re called *Wu:škam*. We got rid of the *Hohokam*.²¹⁶

At the time of the conquest, I’ittoi was still with his people, both *Wu:škam* and *Hohokam*. Today, as Simon has explained, the situation is very different. I’ittoi is absent now, and yet in spite of that absence, he is somehow still present.

SL: Now he’s gone, and *where did the I’ittoi go?* Disappeared. And we can’t see him any more. If we have any problem we can’t go and call the I’ittoi to come and help us the way they helped his people *before*. Yeah, we know where he lives. They’ll say, “He’s there. He’s there, but he’s gone

²¹⁴ Daniel Lopez, “Huhugam,” *The Hohokam Millennium*, Suzanne K. Fish and Paul R. Fish, eds., (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007), 118.

²¹⁵ sl_4.4

²¹⁶ sl_4.4

like...like these others, you know. We can't see him, but he's there. He's around, *like a ghost*, but he can't come back and say this and that to us.²¹⁷

Not unlike the Hohokam, it would seem that I'toi too is *huhugam*. He has retreated to a place known as *I'toi Ki*: "I'toi's home," or "the place where I'toi lives," in a cave high up on Baboquivari mountain. And yet contemporary O'odham remain vitally engaged with I'toi and these other *huhugam*, who have gone into the land, connecting O'odham in the present to their past and their relatives that are embedded, or emplaced, within the land. According to Danny Lopez, "These places are what we consider sacred places because they are the evidence that reminds us of the long-ago people, or Huhugam....some of us feel strongly that we are a part of the ancient past."²¹⁸

*Place and Person in Cosmos and History*²¹⁹

Conversations with O'odham for this study have yielded discussion about three O'odham cosmological realms, though these certainly do not exhaust the possible realms within the O'odham cosmos. In addition to *ka:cim jewed*, or the "staying earth," O'odham discuss a place called *da:m ka:cim*, which can be translated as "up above laying," "on top laying," as well as "heaven." O'odham also talk about *si'alig weco*, a place usually spoken of as being in the East where O'odham are said to go when they die. Although the literature suggests that O'odham conceive of heaven as a place for God and dead white saints – almost like an exclusive country club – with dead O'odham typically

²¹⁷ sl_4.4

²¹⁸ Lopez, "Huhugam," 120-21.

²¹⁹ This section title is obviously draws upon the title Mircea Eliade's classic work, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, Willard R. Trask, trans., (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1959 [1949]).

going to the east, Simon Lopez expressed uncertainty in a conversation talking about death and heaven.²²⁰

SS: Do O'odham go to heaven?

SL: I don't know! [Laughing] I really can't say! Like I said, you know, I don't know. Like for instance, that Saint Kateri [Tekakwita] now. She's a Saint. And I wouldn't say right now she's with God. She's *seen* God. Maybe when she became a *Saint*, maybe she did, maybe she is [in heaven]. Like all these other Saints that we have, maybe they are with God, but we don't know. Like I said, I don't know. I don't think anybody would really know.²²¹

Like many O'odham, Simon was reluctant to make any definite statements about what happens after death without already having experienced death in order to know from first hand experience. But what was most striking in this conversation, which took place several months before Kateri was canonized on October 21, 2012, was how Kateri's impending canonization might transform O'odham cosmologies.²²² Because no O'odham, or "Indians," seem to have been admitted to heaven before (or at least for very long), Simon stated that the common phrase "he's with God now" seemed a bit strange, at least when spoken *by* one O'odham *about* another O'odham.

²²⁰ Bahr, "Pima-Papago Christianity," 161-64; Donald Bahr, "Pima Heaven Songs," *Recovering the Word: Essays on Native American Literature*, Brian Swann and Arnold Krupat, eds., (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1987); Kozak and Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*, 65-66; I must also note that Mary Narcho, who previously noted that she was offended by any association between devils and cowboys, also strenuously objected to the notion that O'odham and non-O'odham might go to different places when they die. She stated, "That's the first time I've heard that! [laughter] I totally don't believe that. That's discrimination. No, I don't believe that. I don't believe that. I've never heard that." See mn_1.2 for the transcript of this discussion.

²²¹ sl_5.2

²²² For another analysis of the "structure of the conjuncture," see Marshall Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1981); Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985).

When asked where O’odham want to end up, Simon remembers his grandparents, voicing his grandmother and grandfather, Juan Lopez, which further evokes their memories.²²³

SS: Where do O’odham *want to go* when they die?

SL: They say that O’odham, you know, when you die, you go to where they call it *East*. They say they’re gonna go to *si’alig weco*. And they say that there’s a place back East where you go when you die. They always say that that’s where you go when you die, as O’odham.²²⁴

According to Simon, the received O’odham tradition states that O’odham go to another realm in the East. However, the boundary between this world of the living and the other world of the dead in the East is said to be porous. Simon went on to describe his grandfather, who he said regularly passed time in the company of his dead relatives.

SL: My grandpa [Juan Lopez] is a real good medicine man. And he talks to the *ghosts*, the people that dies. And when my grandpa is asleep and drunk, he would be talking, talking, and talking in his sleep! And then my grandma would say, “He’s dreaming again. That’s why he’s saying that.” And sure enough, sometimes he would say that he’s dreaming that he’s with *these guys*. And I guess that’s why he was talking is because he was talking to those people, and things like that! And he always says that he’s dreaming with his *dad*, or his *mom*, or his *brother* that passed away.²²⁵

As Simon continued to describe O’odham relationships with the dead, it became increasingly clear that “the East” was not some abstract place that that existed no where in particular. Instead, for Simon, O’odham dead can be found living in particular places in the landscape.

²²³ For another examination of a near-death experience of Simon Lopez’s grandfather, Juan Lopez, as memorialized in a quail song and a devil song, see Kozak and Lopez, “Translating the Boundary between Life and Death in O’odham Devil Songs,” 281-283.

²²⁴ sl_5.2

²²⁵ sl_5.2

SL: And he was telling me that there's a place back East. There's a mountain, *a big, high, long mountain*, and it's got *seven heads*, that mountain. Maybe you've seen that, by Green Reservoir back here when you go in that side, when they call it Ku'ukcul [Ko'okol, or Chili Mountain]. And he said that there's a place over there, where they call it Wewa'ak Mo'okam Do'ag [Seven Headed Mountain].²²⁶

Simon knew his conversation partner had seen this mountain, known by two names because it is right next to Felix Antone's home in Green Reservoir – also known as Green Well, or Pozo Verde in Spanish, and Cedagī Wahia in O'odham – where Felix's walkers assemble to begin their journey to Magdalena together. Although Simon's listener had walked *on top* of this mountain, Simon stated his grandfather had been *inside* these mountains.

SL: And *beneath* that, *boy*, there's joy there! You can find *all* of these people that's passed away. They're cowboys. They're cowboys. And they would have round up right there. Boy, they'll be *chasing* horses, *roping* horses, cattle, and things like that in that area! And he said, "That's where they go. You're a cowboy, you die, you go over there. And meet with all those relatives, friends, or whatever, and enjoy yourself over there with all those cowboys." And he says that, "That's where I go sometimes. I dream that I was back there with those guys, doing all this cowboy work, riding broncs and things like that." And he's always saying that when he dreams, he dreams that he's back there. So when somebody is dying, and he would say, "He's gonna go to the Seven Head Mountain to see his friends and relatives when he dies."²²⁷

Conversational topics that day were precipitated by the recent death of Felix Antone, the leader of the large group of walkers. Following Felix Antone's death on January 31, 2012, Simon Lopez spoke in O'odham during the funeral services for Felix. Simon's words strongly affected those who were present. Simon later translated, 'preaching' like he did at the funeral:

²²⁶ sl_5.2

²²⁷ sl_5.2

SL: Now that Felix is *gone*...I don't want anybody to say, you know, that you can't make it because Felix is *not there*. *Keep going*. Keep going. Keep doing it even though he's gone; there's others that are helping you, that will be helping you, through the *walk*. And so, you guys, keep going. And I know that in spirit Felix *will* be with you. And Felix will probably help you *a lot*, you know, and give you *strength to walk*, and all that.²²⁸

Essentially, Simon exhorted Felix's walkers not to say or think that Felix is not present with them when they walk to Magdalena. Instead, Simon claimed that Felix would be with his walkers, helping them along the way. Simon went on to explain that not only Felix, but many O'dham dead make their way to Magdalena, even in death, as they once did in life.

SL: And as we understand in our *culture* that we're there, they're there, even though they're gone. I know *myself* that I've *always* said that when I get to Magdalena, I always get things that my dad likes, or my grandpa, or my mom, and put it somewhere, where I know that they're there and do their shares, you know, the time when we're at Magdalena. Because I know that my grandpa tells me and my dad and everybody that, "They're there. The ones that we *lost* that always go over there, they're, they're over there with us. You *can't see them*, but *they'll see you*." And so, you know, that's how we say, you know, that "they're there *in spirit*." So that's what I was telling *them*, you know, that Felix will be with you guys on your walk. And so you just think about that, and just keep going.²²⁹

For many O'dham, Christianity is simply the way of their grandmothers and grandfathers. When contemporary O'dham journey to Magdalena, they are retracing the paths of their relatives and walking in the footsteps of their ancestors.²³⁰ Moving across

²²⁸ sl_3.1

²²⁹ sl_3.1.

²³⁰ The interpretation of O'dham pilgrimages to Magdalena in this work is similar to Rebecca Solnit's line of thinking on the subject: "A path is a prior interpretation of the best way to traverse a landscape, and to follow a route is to accept an interpretation, or to stalk your predecessors on it as scholars and trackers and pilgrims do. To walk the same way is to reiterate something deep; to move through the same space the same way is a means of becoming the same person, thinking the same thoughts....It's this that makes pilgrimage, with its emphasis on repetition and imitation, distinct amid all the modes of walking." Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 68.

the land, whether by foot or through song, follows those who have gone before. Moreover, these movements connect O’odham in the present with loved ones whom they have lost, with powerful entities embedded in the landscape, and with histories embedded within the land that have not been written. These movements across the landscape, or landscapes of movement, constitute what Jack Waddell has called “an emotional space” through which “[s]omething important about man’s environment feeds back into Papago awareness through ritual participation,” such as walking to Magdalena.²³¹ As Michael J. Sallnow has argued, “Landscapes exist in time as well as in space.”²³² In conceiving of landscape as a medium for materializing time in space, or making the past present in place, Sallnow borrows from Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of chronotopes, in which “[t]ime, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history.”²³³ In this sense, the findings of this study strongly support Bernard Fontana’s view that “[t]o be on the road to Magdalena in early October is to take part in the richest kind of living history, to participate in the weaving together of past, present, and future.”²³⁴

A journey through space toward Magdalena may also become a journey backward through time as each step evokes the memories of those who have passed that way

²³¹ Jack O. Waddell, “The Place of the Cactus Wine Ritual in the Papago Indian Eco-system,” *The Realm of the Extra-Human: Ideas and Actions*, Aghananda Bharati, ed. (The Hague: Mouton, 1976), 224.

²³² Michael J. Sallnow, *Pilgrims of the Andes: Regional Cults in Cusco* (Washington, D.C. and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987), 12.

²³³ Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, Michael Holquist ed., (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 84.

²³⁴ Bernard L. Fontana, “Pilgrimage to Magdalena,” *The American West* 18:5 (1981), 41.

before. Past, present, and future seem simultaneously tangible, as O’odham become a part of a living history and a larger community united by a shared journey. And many O’odham feel the presence of their ancestors and the dead as they walk along the road to Magdalena. For instance, remember the words of Simon Lopez’s grandfather: “They’re there....they’re over there with us. You *can’t see them*, but *they’ll see you*.”

Summary

This chapter shows some of the ways in which O’odham have made Christianity their own. It has also begun to show that O’odham have embedded – or emplaced – Christianity within their ancestral landscapes. Crucially, *Walking to Magdalena* is situated within what is here referred to as “landscapes of movement.” Following Tweed, as well as the theme of movement, these theoretical and methodological inclinations are named “theoretical wandering.” The chapter has introduced the intertwined notions of place and person, or better yet, “Real People,” illustrating some of the ways in which places and persons become associated with one another. Each of these themes will be further developed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 2

O'ODHAM SONGSCAPES:

JOURNEYS TO MAGDALENA REMEMBERED IN SONG

It is a language useful for pulling memory from the depths of the earth.
It is useful for praying with the earth and sky.
It is useful for singing songs that pull down the clouds.
It is useful for calling rain.
It is useful for speeches and incantations
that pull sickness from the minds and bodies of believers.
- Ofelia Zepeda²³⁵

Introduction

This chapter poses two questions. First, how do O'odham evoke movement across their land through songs? Second, how do these same songs evoke the O'odham past embedded in these places? "Evoke" is used here with the meaning of causing to recall unspoken memories embedded in the land. Moreover, not only words, but also sounds, smells, and movements evoke O'odham pasts embedded in these places. Present day O'odham "walkers" participate in past movements, particularly when these past movements across their land are evoked through songs that contain the memories of previous journeys.²³⁶ Moving across their ancestral lands, contemporary O'odham walkers often think about their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents who have made the journey before them. Indeed, the land itself holds the past of these people,

²³⁵ Ofelia Zepeda, "Birth Witness," *Where Clouds are Formed* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2008), 12-13.

²³⁶ As David Kozak has recently claimed, the words in O'odham songs "have the ability to move us." David L. Kozak and David I. Lopez. "Translating the Boundary between Life and Death in O'odham Devil Songs," *Born in the Blood: On Native American Translation*, Brian Swann, ed., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 275.

including past movements, which are evoked through retracing the steps of those who have gone before through both walking (see chapter four) and through song.

Although Vine Deloria, Jr. established the primacy of place in the study of the indigenous religious traditions of the Americas, and this emphasis has been upheld by other scholars such as James Treat and Greg Johnson, the intention in posing these two questions together is to follow literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin in privileging neither time nor space.²³⁷ Bakhtin's concept of "chronotope," or "time space," which was already introduced in the previous chapter, expresses "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature."²³⁸ Following Bakhtin's synthesis of time and space, O'odham senses of time and space are interdependent, and should be studied as such.²³⁹ This analysis follows a line of inquiry established by linguistic anthropologist Keith Basso, who invoked Bakhtin's notion of "chronotope" in his study of Western Apache senses of place.²⁴⁰

²³⁷ Vine Deloria, Jr., *God is Red: A Native View of Religion* (Golden: Fulcrum Publishing, 1992); James Treat, ed., *For This Land: Writings on Religion in America* (New York and London: Routledge, 1999); Greg Johnson, "North America, Traditional Religions," *The Brill Dictionary of Religion*, Kocku von Stuckrad, ed. (Brill, 2006); Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, Michael Holquist ed., (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).

²³⁸ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 84.

²³⁹ Linguist Madeleine Mathiot claims that time and space are not differentiated in O'odham. Madeleine Mathiot, "Noun Classes and Folk Taxonomy in Papago," *American Anthropologist* 64:2 (1964), 348; William Pilcher challenges Mathiot's findings in William W. Pilcher, "Some Comments on the Folk Taxonomy of the Papago," *American Anthropologist* 69:2 (1967), 204-208.

²⁴⁰ Keith H. Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 62.

Andrew Darling and Barnaby Lewis have shown that O’odham song series encode geographical knowledge.²⁴¹ On the other hand, Donald Bahr as well as David Kozak and David Lopez have demonstrated that O’odham songs encode historical knowledge.²⁴² For many O’odham, no journey is too far and the past is never so far away that it cannot be viscerally felt through song. Those who listen closely to O’odham songs are not only transported through space, but also through time. Indeed, the “ancientness” of the past is palpably present (never too distant) for many O’odham in the present, and faraway places are ever inaccessible, so long as the audience may be transported to the place, and the place made palpably present, through song. O’odham songs, then, evoke what this study has called “landscapes of movement” and movement across the landscape. As Kozak explains, “[t]he contents of O’odham song lyrics feature two related signature characteristics: nouns that describe the landscape, and verbs that tell of the song subject’s actions.”²⁴³

O’odham songs evoke movement across their land through what Bahr has called “filmicness” – or, the “filmic” quality of O’odham songs – in which each sentence

²⁴¹ J. Andrew Darling, “O’odham Trails and the Archaeology of Space,” *Landscapes of Movement: Trails, Paths, and Roads in Anthropological Perspective* (Pittsburgh: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2009), 61-83; J. Andrew Darling and Barnaby V. Lewis, “Songscaes and Calendar Sticks,” *The Hohokam Millennium*, Suzanne K. Fish and Paul R. Fish, eds., (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007), 130-39.

²⁴² Donald Bahr, *How Mockingbirds Are: O’odham Ritual Orations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2011); Donald Bahr, Lloyd Paul, and Vincent Joseph, *Ants and Orioles: Showing the Art of Pima Poetry* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1997); David L. Kozak and David I. Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs: Tohono O’odham Poetics* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999); Kozak and Lopez, “Translating the Boundary between Life and Death in O’odham Devil Songs.”

²⁴³ Kozak and Lopez, “Translating the Boundary between Life and Death in O’odham Devil Songs,” 277.

(usually 3 or 4 in each song) produces a different “word picture.”²⁴⁴ When heard or read together in sequence, these songs evoke movement. Bahr explains, “[s]ince the songs are so short, the shifts of focus across the sentences give an illusion of motion.”²⁴⁵ Moreover, O’odham songs evoke movement through more means than the “illusion” of apparent motion caused by the succession of images or “word pictures,” as Bahr also notes that the verbs in O’odham songs usually describe things in motion, particularly noting the occurrence of “run” in almost every song.²⁴⁶ In turn, as O’odham songs evoke movement, these movements (as well as the songs themselves) evoke memories of past journeys. Movement across the landscape is common in O’odham songs and as Kozak has recently noted, “the movement (often frenzied) of the song’s ‘I’ or ‘it’ is a signature feature of Tohono O’odham song-poetry.”²⁴⁷ Like the Apache cowboy Basso overheard talking quietly to himself and “talked names” all the time, enjoying the pleasure of reciting a long list of Apache place names, O’odham songs transport their audiences to the places through song. The Apache cowboy told Basso, “I ride that way in my mind.”²⁴⁸ No doubt, many O’odham feel the same way about these songs that evoke a sense of journey as well as memories of past journeys.

²⁴⁴ Bahr, Paul, and Joseph, *Ants and Orioles*, 72-73.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 73.

²⁴⁶ David Shaul has noted verb-final positioning O’odham song syntax. David L. Shaul, “Piman Song Syntax: Its Historical Significance,” *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society* (1981), 275-83.

²⁴⁷ Kozak and Lopez, “Translating the Boundary between Life and Death in O’odham Devil Songs,” 278.

²⁴⁸ Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places*, 45-46.

The narratives below aid in answering the two questions posed at the beginning of this chapter through the analysis of six O’odham songs while at the same time considering how O’odham songs map journeys and constitute an O’odham form of historical knowledge.²⁴⁹ Rather than treating O’odham statements as mere data, this method draws upon and elaborates upon O’odham exegesis of their own songs.

Kendall’s Story

One day, long before Kendall Jose was born, his great-grandfather needed a ride from the village of Nolik to Tucson. He was drunk. And, fortunately for Kendall, he was inclined to sing. While he was singing, Kendall’s aunt turned on the tape recorder and began recording. As Kendall tells the story, he voices his grandmother who was there with his great-grandfather on the day in question.

KJ: She said, “We were going to Tucson, and my Dad showed up, and, of course, he was drunk. He wanted a ride.” She said, “But we were going to Tucson, and he wanted to *sing*.” So she said, “So, I got my recorder out, *and he sang those six songs*, real short, he sang ‘em real quick.” And there’s just the vocals. No rattle or anything. He sang those songs for her...And those were the first six songs I started singing.²⁵⁰

Decades later, the tape itself is probably unplayable, the reel long ago stretched out and damaged from overuse. Kendall may not even have a copy any longer. Instead of preserving the recording itself and archiving his great-grandfather’s songs, Kendall prefers a more active and engaged method of cultural preservation: *singing* the songs

²⁴⁹ My interest in these songs follows the trend identified by Jane Chesky in which scholars generally prefer to study “older songs that are supposedly aboriginal.” Jane Chesky, “Indian Music of the Southwest,” *The Kiva* 7:3 (1941), 10.

²⁵⁰ kj_1.1

himself. By all accounts, he picked up the songs quickly, after hearing them only a few times.

KJ: Thank God for cassettes and VHSs, because that's how I learned. Nowadays a lot of people don't like recording things, especially culture and history and stuff like that. They don't like doing it for whatever reason. But, like I said, thank God there was such a thing for me, because that's how I learned. I never met him. I never knew him. I just, all I knew was a tape my Grandma had.²⁵¹

Since memorizing the songs, Kendall taught them to his father, Verlon, and his son, Jojo. Now the Joses are usually busy most evenings and weekends, singing these six songs and doing rosaries for Elders who are near to death, and at wakes, death anniversaries, fiestas, and other events throughout the year including the pilgrimage to Magdalena. Significantly, the six songs that Kendall and his family sing map a journey to Magdalena. Although the songs are usually sung in the transportable rosary format, in which the same six songs may be sung anywhere with one song inserted at each decade, the songs are also sung along the actual road to Magdalena taken by contemporary pilgrims.

Upon encountering the Jose family and their songs on the road to Magdalena in 2009, the songs were presented in a particular sequence, or what ethnomusicologist George Herzog referred to as “mythic dreamt song series.”²⁵² This was the stress of the literature.²⁵³ For example, in their discussion of a much longer sequence of 35 devil

²⁵¹ kj_1.1

²⁵² George Herzog, “Musical Styles in North America,” *Proceedings: Twenty-third International Congress of Americanists* (1928), 455-58; George Herzog, “A Comparison of Pueblo and Pima Musical Styles,” *The Journal of American Folk-Lore* (49:194) 1936: 284-417.

²⁵³ Bahr, Paul, and Joseph, *Ants and Orioles*; Donald Bahr, “Native American Dream Songs, Myth, Memory, and Improvisation,” *Journal de la Société des Americanistes* 80 (1994), 73-94; Donald Bahr, “Papago Ocean Songs and the Wi:gita,” *Journal of the Southwest* 33:4 (1991), 539-56; Donald Bahr, “Pima

songs, Kozak and Lopez explain, “A set’s sequence is fixed in memory to recall it – in sequence – when needed. It seems to us that intentionally scrambling the sequence would prove tremendously difficult and a frankly improbable maneuver.”²⁵⁴ Moreover, within this literature, songs are said to be associated with particular powerful beings or entities, usually called “spirits” or “mythic persons” by both Bahr and Kozak and Lopez who give these songs to particular O’odham dreamers.²⁵⁵ For example, according to Bahr, around 1900 an Akimel O’odham named Hummingbird was “the first Pima of record to go to and return from Heaven,” where he learned 16 songs from Jesus and Mary.²⁵⁶ In the same way, in his study of three Tohono O’odham Airplane songs, Bahr states that “[t]he Airplane songs are said to have been dreamed from (overheard from) an airplane in the 1940s.”²⁵⁷ Likewise, for Kozak and Lopez, devil songs are said to have been given to

Heaven Songs,” *Recovering the Word: Essays on Native American Literature*, Brian Swann and Arnold Krupat, eds., (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1987), 198-246; Donald Bahr, “Pima Swallow Songs,” *Cultural Anthropology* 1:2 1986: 171-87; Donald Bahr, “Four Papago Rattlesnake Songs,” *Speaking, Singing and Teaching: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Language Variation – Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Southwestern Areal Language and Linguistics Workshop*, Florence Barkin and Elizabeth Brandt, eds., (Tempe: Arizona State University Anthropological Research Papers No. 20, 1980), 118-26; Kozak and Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*; David Kozak, “Whirlwind Songs,” *Contemporary Translations of the Native Literatures of North America*, Brian Swann, ed., (Lincoln and Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 340-349.

²⁵⁴ Kozak and Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*, 128.

²⁵⁵ For examples of these usages, see Donald Bahr, “A Grey and Fervent Shamanism,” *Journal de la Société des Américanistes* 77 (1991), 7-26; Bahr, Paul, and Joseph, *Ants and Orioles*, 90-91; Kozak and Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*, 169, n. 2. For Bahr’s earliest work, where he discusses the difficulty of translating “spirit” into O’odham, see Donald M. Bahr, Juan Gregorio, David I. Lopez, and Albert Alvarez, *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sickness (Ká:cim Múmkidag)* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1981 [1973]), 12.

²⁵⁶ Bahr, “Pima Heaven Songs,” 199.

²⁵⁷ Bahr, Paul, and Joseph, “Appendix: Three Papago Airplane Songs and the Dreaming of Ancientness,” *Ants and Orioles*, 176; originally published as Donald Bahr, “Native American Dream Songs, Myth, Memory, and Improvisation.”

living O’odham by devils, or deceased O’odham cowboys.²⁵⁸ If these entities have songs associated with them – illustrating an O’odham strategy of local consumption of the global – then surely, these Magdalena pilgrimage songs must have been given to living O’odham by Saint Francis, their patron saint!

This analysis, however, is certainly incorrect. In this research, no one has ever suggested that these six songs constitute a “mythic dreamt song series.” No one has ever suggested that these six songs associated with pilgrimages to Magdalena, or other songs like them, were given to O’odham by Saint Francis. In fact, Kendall states that these six songs did not even belong to the same series, or song set, and he was uncertain of exactly what sets these six songs originally came from.

SS: Do you know if any of those songs are associated with any particular bird or birds? I know you told me that they’re kind of mixed.

KJ: Yeah. And again, this is the way I’ve understood it was that *the birds* that are referred to a lot in the songs that we sing are the Şu:g, the Mockingbird, and the Gigitwul, the Swallow. And again, I don’t really remember. I think it is the Swallow, the Gigitwul. I know in Gila River, they have different series: the Mockingbird, the Oriole. I know I’ve been asked that question before. To me, I don’t know. *All I know* is that they’re social songs. But what I can tell you is that as far as I know, the birds that are referred to in these songs are the Mockingbird and the Swallow.²⁵⁹

Simon’s Mixed Magdalena Songs

The conversation took place on a cold February morning with Simon Lopez – an observant and knowledgeable cowboy and ritual curer in his 70s with an inquisitive disposition – in his house in Santa Rosa, also known as Kaij Mek, or Burnt Seeds. Much

²⁵⁸ Kozak and Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*, 3, 6, 114.

²⁵⁹ kj_2.1

like the Joses, the Lopezes also have a set of six songs that map a route to Magdalena, which they are often requested to sing for Elders who are near to death, at wakes, death anniversaries, fiestas, and other events throughout the year including the pilgrimage to Magdalena. On several of these occasions, the Lopez rosary has been billed as a “Traditional Rosary.” When Simon was asked about these songs, like Kendall, Simon explained that the songs were “mixed.”

SL: There’s a lot of places, you know, *journey songs*, songs here and there. All these mountains, the villages, and places like that where we go. A lot of times they told me, you know, my ancestors, you know, they said, “Even if you just *sit* and just *sing*, *maybe mixed*, mixed songs and sing, it’s okay. I mean, you know, as long as you’re singing. But if you want to you can do like that, journey around with the songs and come back home.” So *that’s what I’ve been doing all the time*.²⁶⁰

Because this was the first suggestion that songs might be “mixed” to achieve a particular geographical purpose or to evoke a sense of journey, Simon was asked to elaborate:

SS: You talked about singing different *mixed* songs. For those songs that you sing going to Magdalena and back, are those mixed songs? Or are they a single kind of song, like Swallow songs, or something like that? How would you classify or label those songs?

SL: Yeah, they’re mixed. I mean, they’re not the same songs. They’re all different songs, but different places. What I meant when I say *mixed* songs is that when we sing for a journey song, we sing where we’re gonna go. But if you don’t have to, you can just mix it. You can pick one South, North, West, East, or middle, or things like that, you know. Pick a song like that and just mix ‘em and you don’t have to go like, you know, line ‘em up like a journey type. And just like that, the songs for Magdalena is a mix. I mean, you know, it’s a different song that goes along the road.²⁶¹

²⁶⁰ sl_3.2

²⁶¹ sl_3.2

Discussion

Generally speaking, it may be said that O’odham song series map routes through their traditional landscape. According to Bahr, song sequences are something like “postcards sent from someone on an impassioned journey.”²⁶² Bahr contends that for O’odham audiences of song, “[o]n receiving the card one speculates about the mood of the sender, about all that was happening at the moment of the message (the card can’t say much), about what could have changed since the last message, and what the next step in the journey might be.”²⁶³ In their brevity, these songs are similar to the minimalist aesthetic of condensed moral truths in the Apache discursive genre that Basso calls “speaking with names,” in which “depictions provided by Apache speakers are treated by Apache hearers as bases on which to build, as projects to complete, as invitations to exercise the imagination.”²⁶⁴ In short, these songs transport the singer and his audience from place to place as they move from song to song.

Cumulatively, each song series documents at least one such journey. For example, Darling and Lewis identified 14 Oriole songs related by Joseph to Bahr as mapping an Akimel O’odham salt expedition route to the salt flats near the Sonoran Gulf Coast.²⁶⁵ Similarly, the song sequences used in the Lopez and Jose family rosaries sing of particular mountains along the way to Magdalena, mapping routes to Magdalena from the areas of Santa Rosa and Quijotoa, and Nolic and Big Fields, respectively, via two

²⁶² Bahr, Paul, and Joseph, *Ants and Orioles*, 77.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places*, 85.

²⁶⁵ Darling and Lewis, “Songscapes and Calendar Sticks,” 131-35; songs from Bahr, Paul, and Joseph, *Ants and Orioles*, 114-43.

separate points of origin and two different dialect groups. In short, O’odham evoke movement and make journeys through songs such that O’odham song sequences constitute a form of map-making. This is an indigenous cartographic method. In addition to mapping journeys, song sequences present an unfolding narrative, which also has an overall narrative moral that the audience is invited to contemplate. Thus, O’odham are not only inhabitants *of* their landscape, covering it with songs, but they are also inhabited *by* an ethical songscape.

And yet, song series not only map journeys, constituting ethical landscapes in song; they also encode historical knowledge. These same songs evoke the past embedded in these places, recalling unspoken memories embedded in the land through the haiku-like brevity of O’odham songs that Bahr has called “a subjective, action oriented, pictorial and shamanic poetry.”²⁶⁶ To be more precise, the words of songs are considered by many O’odham to be historical speech. As Bahr has shown, O’odham songs are historical documents insofar as O’odham take them to be the actual words of powerful beings with whom O’odham have maintained relationships from time immemorial.²⁶⁷ Therefore, those who listen closely to O’odham songs are not only transported through space, but also through time.

In their otherwise spatial interpretation of the place making capabilities of O’odham song, Darling and Lewis ask an historical question: “How old are O’odham songscapes?”²⁶⁸ Although they concede that archaeological evidence suggests that the

²⁶⁶ Bahr, Paul, and Joseph, “Appendix,” 182.

²⁶⁷ Bahr, *How Mockingbirds Are*, 6.

²⁶⁸ Darling and Lewis, “Songscapes and Calendar Sticks,” 138.

places mentioned in these songs have been used since the time of the Hohokam, they foreclose the possibility that O’odham songs and songscapes encode historical knowledge, asserting that “songscapes refer to the spatial and spiritual order of places and things, not to historical events.”²⁶⁹ However, this interpretive move is hardly novel. In their study of O’odham devil lore, Kozak and Lopez acknowledge that “O’odham think of song-poetry as a kind of ancient talk,” but they immediately undercut the possibility of interpreting songs as historical documents when they assert that this “ancient speech” originates in the “mythical world of spirits.”²⁷⁰ Significantly, Kozak and Lopez reached an impasse regarding the historicity of devil lore and the “ancient speech” in devil songs: “Our individual opinions on origins appear to be irreconcilable, because one hypothesizes a historical and secular origin, and the other a mythical and sacred origin....Kozak argues for a materialist understanding, whereas Lopez argues for a spiritual one.”²⁷¹ This move, made by both Darling and Lewis and Kozak and Lopez, respectively, may be misguided for at least two reasons. First, it depends on a distinction between “myth” and “history” to which I cannot subscribe (see chapters one and five). Second, it spiritualizes O’odham conceptions of these entities, which are regarded by some O’odham to be very real, material, physical beings. These two moves work in tandem, marginalizing indigenous knowledge and worldviews by relegating them an un-real world outside of history.

Bahr has done the most to emphasize how O’odham songs encode historical knowledge and illustrate O’odham historicity, or senses of history. According to Bahr,

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Kozak and Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*, 6.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 8-9.

O’odham songs “are taken to be the actual words of ancient characters, quite like Western historians’ quotations from primary sources. Therefore, the O’odham have what they consider to be historical documents.”²⁷²

In the course of one of many long conversations that covered many topics, without elicitation or prompting, Simon Lopez began to elaborate on how O’odham songs are historical documents.

SL: Some of the songs that we sing is way back there, but we didn’t know [through direct experience]. But we just learned the songs, and that’s why they’re sung. Yeah, it’s true, I guess, all these other songs that I’ve heard, you know, that it’s from way, way back, like the birds songs, you know, what they said. And we heard about it, but we didn’t see it. And that’s the same way with me, I always tell these guys that I didn’t see it. I guess it’s happened way back. There’s very little things that I say that I’ve seen.²⁷³

And yet, while it is productive to think about songs as historical documents containing ancestral speech, it is also imperative to remember that although O’odham songs themselves may be more or less fixed, they are in a special song language that is not directly accessible to contemporary speakers of O’odham. Because the meanings of the texts within these songs is somewhat elusive and encoded in a song language that is distinct from contemporary spoken O’odham, they may be differently translated and understood by contemporary O’odham. While O’odham song texts themselves may remain fixed, O’odham engagements with these texts – bridging the past and the present, as it were – are much more fluid.

²⁷² Bahr, *How Mockingbirds Are*, 6.

²⁷³ sl_5.2

On another occasion, again without elicitation, Simon shared that he often wonders about the somewhat inaccessible ancient speech in O’odham songs and oral traditions.

SL: *I wonder sometimes, you know, “How is it like way, way back in the years back, how the O’odham were, especially in *speaking*, the language, and things like that, you know? How, what words are?” And I *heard* a lot of these, you know, from my great-great-grandmother and father, when they would talk, and sometimes I would say, you know, “What does that *mean*?” And then he would tell me, you know, what that means, what they used to say in O’odham *before*, you know, the word...They used to talk something like that *before*, even the songs, when he would sing the song a long time ago. And sometimes I wouldn’t understand what it *means*. But from what he was telling me, it’s the same thing, you know, it’s like that, which it’s different now. So a lot of these things that I’ve heard from way back, I don’t really understand, you know, *how it used to be*.*²⁷⁴

At the same time, even though Simon did not claim to know directly “*how it used to be*,” the ambiguity of O’odham songs is an invitation for the historical and moral imagination.

If one accepts that song series constitute an O’odham cartography (they map journeys) and historiography (because they contain the historical speech of powerful non-human, or proto-human entities), what could this possibly mean for the song sequences that constitute journeys to Magdalena if they are “mixed,” as both Kendall Jose and Simon Lopez insist for their own separate song sequences? How might O’odham song journeys to Magdalena be understood, knowing that the songs themselves were removed from their original song series contexts? What kinds of maps are these? What becomes of these song texts as encrypted historical documents?

²⁷⁴ sl_4.4

Before attempting to answer these questions, the songs themselves should be presented and analyzed. Following Bahr, these songs are examined as a set.²⁷⁵ As previously mentioned, the Lopez family's song series featured in this chapter consists of six songs. Songs 1-3 constitute a journey from home to Magdalena. Songs 4-6 constitute a return journey from Magdalena to home. What follows is three-step translation process of the Lopez family "traditional rosary" songs. At the ethnographer's request, Simon Lopez's son Louis Anthony Lopez translated these songs in collaboration with Simon, by transcribing the O'odham song language, translating the song language into ordinary O'odham, and then translating the ordinary O'odham into a freely translated English text. This method somewhat follows Bahr's method of translating songs, but skips the step of an awkward literally translated English text between steps two and three.²⁷⁶ This ethnographer's grasp of O'odham is weaker than Bahr's, so any attempt at a directly translated English text will have to wait until a later date. Although Bahr has strongly criticized scholars such as Ruth Underhill for skipping this same step of a literal English translation, this method is justifiable for four reasons: 1) this is the method that Louis Lopez preferred, 2) it is an O'odham rather than a non-O'odham free translation, 3) some of the missing steps of the literal translation are discussed in the interpretations of the translated texts that follows, and 4) it is an artifact of contemporary O'odham engagement of interpretation with O'odham texts from an O'odham past that is not

²⁷⁵ Donald M. Bahr and J. Richard Haefer, "Song in Piman Curing," *Ethnomusicology* 22:1 (1978), 119; for an example of the limitations of analyzing miscellaneous songs in isolation from one another, see E. G. Stricklen, "Notes on Eight Papago Songs," *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology* 20 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965 [1923]), 363-65.

²⁷⁶ Donald Bahr, "A Format and Method for Translating Songs," *Journal of American Folklore* 96:380 (1983), 170-82.

directly accessible to O’odham in the present. Following the three step translation process, Simon Lopez and Louis Lopez offer interpretations of the texts that were recorded separately on various occasions in the course of ongoing conversations with each of them.

Songs

1) Kuñs am o himeta
*Kuñs am o himeta
Kam ñena cu gamhui ñetam a cemaï tonoda
Taş a tonlig a wehm tonoda

Kuñs am him
Kuñs am him
K c am ñedacug gambu ñ-tam cem tonod
Taş tonlig wem tonod

As I’m walking
As I’m walking
I’m watching the light in the distance over me
As it shines with the light of the sun.

The first song, lacking any direct reference to an O’odham place name, begins “here,” which is either Santa Rosa, or in Covered Wells, just north of Quijotoa – mentioned in the next song – which was also the site of the conversation with Louis and where the Lopez family lived before migrating to Santa Rosa. As Simon put it, “It starts from here...here in our home....The *sun* shined at us towards Magdalena and headed us down that way. And that’s where we started going down that way.”²⁷⁷ In other words, the light of the sun in the South beckons O’odham toward Magdalena. Louis also commented that “the sunlight is giving us strength as we’re running towards this [Magdalena]....

²⁷⁷ sl_3.2

That's all the first song is saying, running towards the South with the guidance and the strength of the sun, I guess.”²⁷⁸

Also striking about Simon and Louis Lopez's interpretations of this text, is that the first person singular “I” in the free English translation automatically became a first person plural “we” and “us” in both of their interpretations (see especially song 6 for more). Also, while the O'odham literal translation “*him*” is literally translated as “walking” in English, both Simon and Louis, broaden the meaning to include “running” (*med*) and the more generic “going.” (See more on *him* in chapter four.)

2) Kuñs am a himeta
*Kuñs am a himeta
Iowag tamai cenhai tonoda
Ma:lina cenhe ka wesai koiwe donlida

Kuñs am him
Kuñs am him
Iowag tam cem tonod
Ma:lina ce k-wesko donod

As I'm walking
As I'm walking
On top of Iowag [Quijotoa] is a dim light
Then I notice the lights of Ma:lina shine all over.

Presumably, “Iowag” is “Giho Do'ag,” or Quijotoa. Like the first song (or, to be more precise, songs 1-4), the second song portrays a brightly colored and beautiful landscape, which Claude Lévi-Strauss has called “chromaticism.”²⁷⁹ Both Simon and

²⁷⁸ lal_2.1

²⁷⁹ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969 [1964]).

Louis called attention to the light in this song. Simon explained that the sunshine “shines *the road*” to Magdalena. “And from *there*, we see *the shining*, the road to Magdalena is where it’s [the light] gonna be taking us... clearing it [the way] to us from there [Magdalena, the source of the light] to there [Quijotoa].”²⁸⁰ Louis added, “as they’re getting closer they see the *lights*...the shine of Mali:na...And so that’s what you *saw* as you’re going. You saw this certain mountain [Quijotoa] and there was the gleaming of the light. That’s what you’re running towards...knowing that these are the lights of Mali:na. *And I see them very dimly*.”²⁸¹

3) Siwok anonowaga

*Siwok anonowaga

Hugitanai hemeda, Nupi.· nonowano sisiwone tonoda

Ma:lina cenhewa kowesekoiwe tonoda

Siwol duag

Siwol duag

N-an hugitam him, Nupig duag si’iskol tonod

Ma:lina ce k-wesko tonod

Siwol Mountain

Siwol Mountain

As I’m walking by it I notice lights around Nupig Mountain

From ther [there] I see the lights of Ma:lina [Mali:na] shine all over

This is the first song of this sequence that mentions more than one place name.

Indeed, it mentions three: Siwol Do’ag [Onion Mountain], Ñupig Do’ag [Sucking

Monster Mountain], and Mali:na [Magdalena]. The song itself, and the interpretations of

²⁸⁰ sl_5.1

²⁸¹ lal_2.1

both Louis and Simon suggest excited and frantic movement from the first named place, Siwol Do'ag, to the second named place, Ñupig Do'ag, and on toward the third named place, Mali:na. Moreover, as David Kozak has previously argued in his analysis of O'odham Swallow songs, "[l]ocations and movements create a poetic, or semantic, sense of dizziness [*nodagig*]."²⁸² This frantic, or manic, movement is common to O'odham Swallow songs, even when dizziness, or *nodagig*, is not explicitly mentioned in the songs.²⁸³

"Cebolla" is Spanish for onion. The word entered O'odham vocabulary and phonology as Siwol. El Cebolla, which O'odham more frequently call Siwol, is a small town in Sonora about half way between Tubutama and Magdalena.

Because the giddy movements between these three locations are so sparsely indicated in the song text, Louis and Simon are quoted at greater length:

LL: The third song is actually kind of two different places connected together if you listen to the song. And the first mountain is the Siwol Do'ag, where we camp at on the third night in that little community, Cebolla. And that Siwol Do'ak that runs this way, and then Ne:big Do'ak runs this way. And as they're running below Siwol Do'ak, they see this other mountain [Ñupig Do'ag] standing on this other side. And from the other mountain [Ñupig Do'ag], the lights of Mali:na are a little bit brighter, where they shine a little bit more, and that's what they're running to. Actually, that this song is kind of running along Siwol Do'ak and then getting to that mountain where Mali:na is, right on the other side of the Mali:na, which is those mountains that we go through when we get to Mali:na. And so the third song is actually the song that gets us there to Mali:na.²⁸⁴

²⁸² David Kozak, "Swallow Dizziness, the Laughter of Carnival, and Kateri," *Wicazo Sa Review* 8:2 (1992), 7.

²⁸³ Bahr, "Pima Swallow Songs"; Kozak, "Swallow Dizziness, the Laughter of Carnival, and Kateri," 7.

²⁸⁴ lal_2.1

Simon's comments build upon Louis's, commenting on the theme of chromaticism that unites the first four songs of the song set, explicitly juxtaposing the dimness of the light far in the distance in song two with the brightness of the light in the presence of Mali:na.

SL: When we're getting *close, close* to there, and from a *distance* away, we can see the Ñu:pig, the mountain there. And we can see on top it's shiny. *And that means* that we're there. We're there. And when we *got* to the top of there, we can *see* the shining of the holy city, Magdalena, all over, from our imaginations, you know, that we see *all that is shining* for us [Simon pounds on the table for emphasis] to know that we're there in Magdalena. And that's what it really means when we sung those songs. And when we got there, from the start [Santa Rosa] to where we got [Mali:na], there is still the same thing, you know, that shine. That song that we sung about the mountain is that that's when we're getting right close to it. And *we can see the shine* on top of the sacred mountain. *And when we got there*, we see all that *shining*, you know, on the grounds. That's all it really means.²⁸⁵

The next song begins the return journey home from Magdalena.

4) Kuñs am a himeta
*Kuñs am a himeta
Sikola şunai gamhu cenhewe
Gamhuñ tamhai cemai tonoda

Kuñs am him
Kuñs am him
Sikol şudag gamhu cen
Gamhu tam cem tonod

As I'm walking
As I'm walking
Way over there is Sikol şudag (place where water tweralls [twirls])
On top of it is a dim light.

²⁸⁵ sl_5.1

The transition between songs 3 and 4 implies movement from Magdalena, the final destination in song 3, toward Sikol Şudag in song 4.²⁸⁶ Song 4 signals a directional shift away from Magdalena and back north toward Quijotoa and Santa Rosa. Louis notes this change in direction, commenting, “We’re going straight North where there’s a mountain where one of the main trails used to go through...They say they see this other mountain further up ahead where the *fifth* [emphasis added] song comes in.”²⁸⁷ Simon further explained the significance of Sikol Şudag, mentioned first in this song, where it is “way over there” far off in the distance. “There’s this place where we call Sikol Şudag....They stop there and give away things to the Sa:nto that’s there before they come home for good lucks, and things like that. And that’s why we had to sung *that* before we come back home.”²⁸⁸

5) Gahu Sikola şunai kac
 *Gahu Sikola şunai kac
 Dam heg ñeahanai gikgowa şuliga
 Kuñ heg a tamai kukam a himeda

Gahu Sikol şudag kac
 Gahu Sikol şudag kac
 Dam ant g ñ-a’an am şul
 Kuñ heg tam am him

Way over there is Sikol şudag
 Way over there is Sikol şudag

²⁸⁶ I do not know whether Sikol Şudag has a Spanish name, so I have been unable to locate this place on a map.

²⁸⁷ laI_2.1

²⁸⁸ sl_5.1

On there I offer my eagle feathers
As I'm walking on it.

Louis translates Sikol Şudag as, "Where the Water Goes Around in Circles," which he locates on top of a mountain that he says might be "strong," or "powerful."²⁸⁹ Notably, the image of swirling water, as in an eddy, is a pervasive symbol across the O'odham landscape, found on many Hohokam and O'odham historical artifacts as well as in contemporary O'odham art. Simon further explained, "I think you guys spend the last night there [near Sikol Şudag] before you get to Magdalena on your pilgrimage. There's a little place there, and *at that place* there's a *shrine*. There's a statute. It's about this big. It's called Teresita. Teresa. And it stands there. And according to Felix and my son, Louis, he said that it's there. When they come back from Magdalena, they'll stop by there, last at that place called Sikol Şudag and they'll...give something to that statue. We call it Matoiakcu [?] haicu, offering to the Saint. It can be *money*. It can be grocery, it can be anything, you're belonging, you know, like you're necklace, or ring, or whatever, you know. You're belonging that you can give to them, and then go home."²⁹⁰

If Simon is correct that the group of walkers spend the last night near the place called Sikol Şudag, where there is a shrine for Saint Teresa, then this place is less than 10 kilometers northwest of Magdalena. It is interesting that this song is placed after Magdalena in this sequence because most walkers give no more than a quick sign of the cross with their staffs at this site, sometimes without even stopping on the long, slow march to Magdalena. The song's placement within the sequence here is also consistent

²⁸⁹ laI_2.1

²⁹⁰ sl_3.2

with the ideology and practice of purposeful, disciplined walking (see chapter four), insofar as it is often said that O’odham “walkers” should go first to Saint Francis without interruption before commencing in other activities in and around Magdalena.

6) Inha wa t-weco kacim cenhewen
Inha wa t-weco kacim cenhewen
*Am hegwuwai wañiok kom ñena him
Tam haig gihawal ñeñe mamato

Ina t-weco kacim
Ina t-weco kacim
Am hegwui ñeñoikim
Tam g gigitwul ñeñei amto ka

Under us (from the top of the mountain)
Under us
I am walking toward the sounds
On top of it you will here [hear] the songs of the swallows

According to Louis Lopez, song 6 is about descending, and moving frantically toward the songs of the Swallows, which is the familiar sound of social songs, and therefore celebrations, in Santa Rosa. The scene is essentially that of a homecoming celebration.²⁹¹

LL: So when we’re coming back, that’s what we hear down here are the songs of the Swallows. And that’s what we’re going towards. We’re going towards the songs, which basically means *our area*, because the songs of the Swallows come from our area. So we’ve returned home, back to where the songs of the Swallows began, or are from. And that’s what I think it [song 6] represents is that our home is where the songs of the Swallows are. And that’s what we hear as we’re coming home. That’s what we’re running towards: the songs of the swallows.²⁹²

²⁹¹ See also Camillus Lopez descriptions of such historical events in Santa Rosa in chapter four.

²⁹² lal_2.1

Louis elaborates by stating that, “depending on what area you come from, there’s certain birds that the different areas use as their [long pause] messengers. We use the Swallows, so *in most of our songs that we sing*, we sing about the Swallows.”²⁹³ The songs, or sounds of the Swallows seem to entice and excite the ambiguous traveling “I” returning to the village of Santa Rosa in the valley below. Like the oft-heard O’odham phrase, “Smells like village,” the sounds of Swallows, or Swallow songs, signal a return home for residents of Santa Rosa.

Sensual and affective connections between various birds and O’odham run deep.²⁹⁴ For example, ethnobiologist Gary Nabhan, who has noted the symbiotic mutualism between bird populations and O’odham villages, recorded an O’odham farmer stating that birds “come where the people are. When the people live and work in a place, and plant their seeds and water their trees, the birds go live with them. They like those places, there’s plenty to eat and that’s when we are friends to them.”²⁹⁵

Indeed, the relationships between Santa Rosa O’odham and Swallows are so close, that at times Simon collapses the distinction between Swallows and O’odham, at least for those O’odham who sing Swallow songs.

SS: Are they mostly the birds [Swallows] that are *speaking* in those songs?

SL: Yeah, part of it; but part of it is just us.

²⁹³ lal_2.1

²⁹⁴ For an excellent example focusing on such connections elsewhere, see Steven Feld, *Sound and Sentiment: Birds, Weeping, Poetics, and Song in Kaluli Expression* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990).

²⁹⁵ Gary Paul Nabhan, *The Desert Smells Like Rain: A Naturalist in Papago Indian Country* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1982), 96.

SS: Oh.

SL: You know, that we're going to there. And the others songs that we made, that they made, you know, *is* about us, you know.

SS: Oh.

SL: Where we went to those different places. So it's really about *us*, you know, going to Magdalena and back.²⁹⁶

While Simon's interpretation echoes, at least in part, Louis's explanation, Simon's analysis is more complex. First, as previously noted, Simon collapses the distinction between Swallows and O'odham. Second, according to Simon, the speech in these songs is primarily that of living O'odham in a sort of poetic ethnographic present. For Simon, it seems that the speech is, at most, only secondarily Swallow speech. Third, and perhaps most interestingly, the ahistorical speakers in the unspecified transportable present are drawn toward their imminently future social selves – or to put it slightly differently, moving toward the sounds of themselves celebrating, singing, and dancing, in the tangibly near present.

SS: So is it more like they're hearing the Swallows, or are they singing those Swallow songs, or is that kind of like the same thing?

SL: *Yeah.* Yeah, it's about the same thing. It's about the same thing... We're hearing all of the Swallow's songs that we'll be singing. And most of it is the Swallow songs that we sung when we do the celebration, or singing, you know. And that's when we'll be singing all these songs about the Swallows.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁶ sl_5.1

²⁹⁷ sl_5.1

Simon consistently maintains that what has been translated as the first persons singular “I” of this and other songs is really always a first person plural “we,” a traveling entourage of O’odham and Swallows.

SL: When they say that “*I am walking here,*” or “*I am going here,*” and things like that, it’s just *put* in there *so people understand*. Now, we could be talking about a *group* of people that’s going there, or even the birds. So if they *knew* that it’s the Swallow’s song, we’ll know that it means that it’s the birds going here and there. *And it could mean the people*, for the people that go around there. It’s the same thing with the other songs, like you said, you know, about the Swallows, the birds, whatever we’re singing is the group that’s going around, and things like that, *not only one* person, you know. A lot of times it’ll state on there [in O’odham song translations], you know, “*I am here. I am going. I will be going here,*” but it could mean the whole group. You know, *not only just one*, or things like that, or when we get home to celebrate the songs and things like that, it’s for *everybody*, you know, the whole group that’ll be doing that. So that’s what really is on that thing, “*I.*” Yeah, I’ve seen a lot of this, you know.... “*I’m here. I’m there. I go here. I go there.*” But, usually it’s the group. But *the song sounds like* it’s just the one person or something like that. But most of the time it’s the group that does everything like that.²⁹⁸

In his study of O’odham Swallow songs, Bahr suggests that “[t]he interesting question is who are the ‘I’s’?”²⁹⁹ Noting the ambiguity of “I’s,” Bahr offers three answers: 1) I the swallow; 2) I the dreamer being taken on a journey by the swallow; and 3) the O’odham “I’s” singing and dancing the Swallow songs in the present – whenever that may be. Crucially, Bahr states that the third meaning is only circumstantially or implicitly present. Bahr claims, “[t]he standard native interpretation is, ‘Swallows do this, they act just like humans.’ What I have not heard is the additional statement, ‘and so the ‘I’s’ of social dancing songs also refer to the people dancing.’”³⁰⁰ As shown above, this

²⁹⁸ sl_5.1

²⁹⁹ Donald Bahr, “Pima Swallow Songs,” *Cultural Anthropology* 1:2 (1986), 184.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

study has yielded a statement very close to this, unlike Bahr. Consequently, Simon's interpretation of these songs (again, described mostly as Swallow songs) as being "really about *us*, you know, going to Magdalena and back" is the clearest O'odham statement in support of Bahr's third meaning of the deliberately ambiguous "I's" in O'odham social songs.³⁰¹ Therefore, Simon's analysis of these songs (especially song six) is significant in and of itself for those who are interested in the interpretation of O'odham social songs.

Summary

Two questions were posed in the beginning of this chapter. First, how do O'odham evoke movement across their land through songs? Second, how do these same songs evoke the O'odham past embedded in these places? These questions gave rise to still more questions. In light of the preceding discussion on the "mixed" arrangement of these six songs, as both Simon Lopez and Kendall Jose label each of their separate song sequences, how might O'odham song journeys to Magdalena be understood, knowing that the songs themselves were removed from their original song series contexts? What kinds of maps, or postcards, are these? What becomes of these song texts as encrypted historical documents?

The evidence presented above suggests that the songs themselves, as well as the O'odham interpretations of these songs that have been included in this chapter are more geographist than historicist, to adopt and play with cultural geographer Edward Soja's

³⁰¹ sl_5.1; Simon Lopez's statement also resonates with Ofelia Zepeda's interpretive inclinations regarding movements and changes in the desert, which according to Zepeda, "almost always include people." Ofelia Zepeda, "Autobiography," *Here First: Autobiographical Essays by Native American Writers*, Arnold Krupat and Brian Swann, eds., (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), 414.

critique of historicism as that which “actively submerges and peripheralizes the geographical or spatial imagination.”³⁰² At the same time, it is not entirely fair to say that the songs or their interpretations are more geographist than historicist. There is no submergence or marginalization of the historical imagination here, as Simon Lopez in particular has shown. While the cartographic characteristic of these songs is more or less stable, the historiographic quality of these songs is clearly much more flexible, complex, and nuanced between these songs (as more or less stable texts) and contemporary O’odham audiences of these songs.

While the places mentioned in these songs may seem to be somewhat stable, it is important to note that these can be, and frequently are, sung in various places. Therefore, in the sense of performance, though not reference (to named places), these songs are eminently transportable. However, in terms of audience (that is, who the songs are 1) sung for, 2) sung to, as well as 3) who the songs are about), the evidence suggests a transferability and flexibility of audience and subject. After all, while these songs are “mixed,” they are also mostly Swallow songs (for the Lopezes) or Mockingbird songs (for the Joses), and yet at the same time the songs are said to be *about* and *for* “us,” the present day O’odham walkers.

This chapter confirms that in the O’odham context, Vine Deloria, Jr. was correct in arguing that “American Indians hold their lands – places – as having the highest possible meaning, and all their statements are made with this reference point in mind.”³⁰³

³⁰² Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London and New York: Verso, 1989), 15.

³⁰³ Vine Deloria, Jr., *God is Red: A Native View of Religion* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1992), 62.

Indeed, O'odham pasts are embedded within these places, evoked through movements across the land in both songs and actual walking (see chapter four).

The evidence from O'odham song texts and interpretations of these texts included in this chapter strengthens the thesis of this chapter by clearly demonstrating, at least in the cases of Simon and Louis Lopez, *how* O'odham have embedded Christianity in the land through song.

LL: So even going back to those [six] songs that we sing now in between the decades, those songs are not any songs having to do with church, or any songs having to do with the religion [Catholicism]. They're traditional O'odham songs, but the songs of the path of going to Mali:na, prior to the Catholicism, prior to [laughter]...you know, Father Kino. This path O'odham had originally followed to go to that little village of Mali:na, and that's where these songs come from. They come from way back before the whole Spanish thing. That's how they journeyed to Mali:na...That path has been *there*, for centuries prior to, you know, the whole Saint Francis movement thing.³⁰⁴

³⁰⁴ lal_1.2

CHAPTER 3

WALKERS AND THEIR STAFFS:

WALKING STICKS BY WAY OF CALENDAR STICKS AND SCRAPING STICKS

There's a lot of use for those. Those are important belongings to people that get them. I don't know if you were *taught*, I mean if you were *told*, when you were first given that walking stick, that *it can help you* in many other ways, you know, *not only the walk to Magdalena*. And anywhere else that you have to go – an important walk, or a *place*, you know, that you go – that you have to have it. *Take it, and it'll help you*. And so it's not only there [to Magdalena] that that'll go. Just like I've told my kids, you know, when they first got it, "*It's yours. You can take it*, even to other people's *celebrations*," especially the Feast of Saint Francis or some things like that. "*You can take yours too, you know, and use it. And this way, you know, it'll help you a lot, you know, not only when you go down there* [to Magdalena]."....So, there's a lot of ways that it can be handled: those walking sticks.

- Simon Lopez³⁰⁵

Introduction

For Felix Antone's group of O'odham walkers between, those who made the walk for the first time were given a staff, or walking stick, at the beginning of their journey. They were instructed to keep their staff close to them at all times, make sure that it is always upright, and otherwise treat the staff with respect. In some ways, these sticks are treated as though they were sentient beings. Having seen how veteran walkers have beautified their sticks after many years of working on them and walking with them, most new walkers are eager to attain their own and begin decorating their stick. However, they are told not to alter their sticks in any way until they have completed their first walk and

³⁰⁵ sl_3.2

ribbons have been tied on their staffs.³⁰⁶ Regardless of how O’odham decorate their sticks and otherwise make them their own, they almost always seem to record history, or at least the number of times that the stick and its owner have made the journey to Magdalena.

At camp each night, these staffs are made into a moveable altar by standing them up in a line and partially burying them in the desert sand. In front of these sticks, O’odham place their saints and candles, do their rosaries, and sing. Outside of the context of the journey to Magdalena, these sticks perform a similar function as they are integrated into home altars and travel with their owners from village to village for various fiestas, wakes, and other events throughout the year. Indeed, one of the primary objectives of O’odham who travel to Magdalena is to acquire the trappings of Christian material culture to bring back to, and distribute within, O’odham villages.

Significantly, although these staffs, or walking sticks, play a prominent role in everyday O’odham Catholic practice, these sticks have not even been mentioned in any academic literature on the O’odham. This chapter aims to fill in this gap within the academic literature on the O’odham by focusing on these staffs. Unlike these unstudied sticks, scraping sticks and calendar sticks have been extensively studied by anthropologists. J. Andrew Darling and Barnaby Lewis argue that markings notched into scraping sticks, or rasps – like songs themselves (see chapter two) – document song journeys in geographical space, and that calendar sticks provide a temporal or

³⁰⁶ Although the plural of “staff” is often represented as “staves,” I consciously used “staffs” as the plural to reflect the practice in the community. Furthermore, the Oxford English Dictionary finds both versions in common use.

chronological, rather than geographical, itinerary.³⁰⁷ Indeed, songs are not the only way in which O’odham map journeys and record history. This comparison between rasping sticks and calendar sticks is extremely suggestive in terms of O’odham theories and representations of space and time, especially when walking sticks are added into the mix. What does this discussion contribute to a deeper understanding of O’odham conceptions of place and person, given that these staffs not only document chronological and geographical journeys, but they are also treated with respect, as though they were sentient beings? Moreover, what is the relationship between walkers and their sticks? In order to avoid speculation on the matter, several O’odham consultants spoke extensively about these walking sticks, their relationship with walkers, and any relation that they may or may not have with these other sticks that have previously been the subject of scholarly inquiry.

History in Objects: How the O’odham Lost the Flute

Today, O’odham do not use flutes in their songs like their Yoeme, or Yaqui, neighbors. However, according to some, O’odham used to have flutes. In the version of the story recorded by Juan Dolores, titled “The Yaquis Won the Flute from Us,” the story begins by establishing the context: “It is said this happened to a man when the puberty ceremony first appeared. He lost his wife through these ceremonies because she ran

³⁰⁷ J. Andrew Darling and Barnaby V. Lewis, “Songscapes and Calendar Sticks,” *The Hohokam Millennium*, Suzanne K. Fish and Paul R. Fish, eds., (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007), 130-39.

around following the ceremonies, and was told about everywhere.”³⁰⁸ The man’s wife, then, was one of the women who enjoyed the first puberty ceremony too much and could not stop dancing until they had destroyed their homes becoming displaced, homeless women whom nobody wanted and whom could only bring their placeless condition to an end by becoming the Pleiades (see chapter four).³⁰⁹ At the loss of his wife, the man became filled with shame and sorrow, and so “he wandered around feeling like crying” until he came to Reed Mountain, where he drank from a well. Thinking of what was ahead for him, “the thought suddenly occurred that he would make a flute and cry in it imitating the whip-poor-will. That way no one would know he was crying, and he would overcome the sorrow in his heart.” So he took a reed from the place, made a flute, and played it in a cave at the place. Women were drawn to the beautiful music, and when he saw them, “he forgot his wife and no longer cried. He just played and sang his songs over and over.” After playing his songs for an unspecified length of time, he eventually attracted four Yaqui, or Yoeme, women from the south. He was attracted to the youngest woman, so he married her. She took him home with her, which according to the narrator, is how “the Yaquis learned about the flute from us, and we don’t have the flute.”

Although the version of this story recorded by Dolores, related above, suggests that the O’odham man’s flute playing drove the plot toward a resolution in which his overwhelming sorrow was overcome, and his placeless condition of wandering about came to an end when crying into the flute attracted another mate to whom he was attracted. Like his former wife, who became the Pleiades, the O’odham man had to move

³⁰⁸ Dean and Lucille Saxton, *O’othham Hoho’ok A’agitha: Legends and Lore of the Papago and Pima Indians* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1973), 221-225.

³⁰⁹ Saxton and Saxton, *O’othham Hoho’ok A’agitha*, 24-25.

to the Yoeme woman's home and bring his flute with him, in order to restore a dynamic sociable balance thrown off by unrestrained and abandoned movement. However, the telling of this story contains a single line that suggests that "crying" into the flute was itself disruptive, contributing more to the ongoing problem of undisciplined movement than its resolution: "He just played and sang his songs over and over." The O'odham man's unending repetition of "crying" into the flute bears a striking resemblance to the unconstrained and ceaseless movement of women like his wife who became the Pleiades. Another version of the same story, recorded by Ruth Underhill, supports this interpretation of undisciplined movement (ceaseless dancing) provoking further undisciplined movement ("crying" into the flute). However, in Underhill's version, the chronology is reversed: "the playful women were called out long ago by a youth who played the flute and drove them mad."³¹⁰ In this case, the man's flute playing is responsible for the undisciplined and amoral movement of O'odham women and yet again – though this time with the cause and effect switched – undisciplined movement ("crying" into the flute) provokes further undisciplined movement (ceaseless dancing). Either way, in both versions of the story, a history of shame, sorrow, crying, ceaseless dancing, alienation, love lost and regained are embedded into a particular object: the flute.

Like the notion of the past being embedded into the landscape (see chapter one), "The Yaquis Won the Flute from Us," also illustrates how the past can also become embedded into objects through past use. For the purposes of the present study, this story

³¹⁰ Ruth M. Underhill, *Social Organization of the Papago Indians* (New York: AMS Press, 1969 [1939]), 183.

demonstrates how history accumulates not only in places, but also in other objects, including sticks as well as ribbons. Arjun Appadurai famously called this “the social life of things.”³¹¹ Much like flutes are a reminder of the unintended consequences of the first puberty ceremony, certain objects such as staffs and ribbons – as well as saints, rosaries, holy water, and so forth – that have been imbued with Saint Francis’s borrowed power in Magdalena are, as Bernard Fontana noted in his brief discussion of the pilgrimage to Magdalena, “reminders of the journey to Magdalena.”³¹²

Calendar Sticks

On this stick they carved signs that reminded them of things they wanted to remember. Sometimes in the evenings they would look at this stick and tell what had happened in their grandfathers’ time. Or they would remember a story.

- George Webb³¹³

O’odham staffs and flutes are not the only objects into which history accumulates and becomes embedded. Writing about O’odham calendar sticks, or *hikanaba*, Tod Swanson maintains that with each passing year, “as the seasons pass, the stick becomes historied.”³¹⁴ Throughout the period of its use, the stick is gradually covered with cuts, aiding the historical memory of the stick’s keeper who experiences and narrates the stories held within the stick. For Swanson, ideally at least, the stick’s keeper “becomes,

³¹¹ Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

³¹² Bernard L. Fontana, “Pilgrimage to Magdalena,” *The American West* 18:5 (1981), 60.

³¹³ George Webb, *A Pima Remembers* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1959), 7.

³¹⁴ Tod D. Swanson, “Weathered Character: Envy and Response to the Seasons in Native American Traditions,” *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 20:2 (1992), 299.

like the stick, a seasoned character.”³¹⁵ Crucially, the sticks themselves mature and become storied along with their keepers. J. Andrew Darling and Barnaby Lewis provide further support for the notion of history accumulated in calendar sticks when they assert that, “[t]he historical narrative and the symbols for each event become part of the stick itself....Even after the keeper has died, the stick remains a repository of personal historical knowledge.”³¹⁶

As J. Richard Haefer has previously noted, O’odham histories are found primarily in calendar sticks and narratives.³¹⁷ However, most historians and anthropologists have been suspicious of these sources as reliable histories. For example, in 1871, the same year that Akimel O’odham lifeways were forever transformed when the Gila River was dammed and the Presbyterian missionary Charles H. Cook arrived among the Akimel O’odham, the United States Army Captain F. E. Grossmann complained that the Akimel O’odham “have but vague ideas of the doings of their forefathers, and whatever accounts may have been handed down to them have been so changed in the transmission that they cannot be deemed reliable now.”³¹⁸ Frank Russell similarly called the calendar sticks “annals” rather than “history,” because as Russell put it, “[c]hronologic sequence is subordinated to narrative.”³¹⁹ Moreover, Russell adds: “As usual with Amerindian

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ Darling and Lewis, “Songscapes and Calendar Sticks,” 137.

³¹⁷ John Richard Haefer, *Musical Thought in Papago Culture* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1981), 50.

³¹⁸ Grossmann, F. E. “The Pima Indians of Arizona,” *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1871* (Washington, D.C.: GPO 1873), 407.

³¹⁹ Frank Russell, “Pima Annals,” *American Anthropologist* 5 (1903), 76.

records these contain much that is trivial and omit much that is important.”³²⁰ Likewise, when José Santos of San Xavier del Bac related his calendar stick covering the length of one six foot stick and a portion of another to Ruth Underhill over a period of two weeks, Underhill called the calendar stick “gossip rather than history,” due to its failure to mention policy history, such as the Gadsden Purchase in 1854, the Civil War extending into Arizona in 1863, and Arizona becoming a territory, and finally a state in 1912, as well as the establishment of reservations, churches, and land allotments.³²¹ Nevertheless, not all scholars have been as skeptical of calendar sticks and their accompanying narrative histories as reliable sources of history. A.T. Kilcrease, for example, significantly noted that O’odham calendar sticks are important because they tell us what particular O’odham themselves regarded as noteworthy and important in their own histories, as well as “by implication, what was not regarded as important.”³²² Noting that the marks on these sticks are “not writing,” but memory aids, Kilcrease suggested that so-called “calendar sticks” might better be called “memory” sticks.

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ Ruth M. Underhill, “A Papago Calendar Record,” *The University of New Mexico Bulletin, Whole Number 322, Anthropological Series 2:5* (1938), 13-14.

³²² A.T. Kilcrease, “Ninety Five Years of History of the Papago Indians,” *Southwestern Monuments Monthly Report* (April 1939), 297-310; reprinted as Anonymous, “Appendix A: A Chronology of Papago and Pima History Taken from Calendar Sticks,” *Facts about the Papago Indian Reservation and the Papago People* (Sells, AZ: The Papago Tribe of Arizona, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Papago Agency, U.S. Public Health Service, 1972), A1-A11.

Scraping Sticks

As Simon Lopez remarked, an O’odham scraping stick, or rasp, “makes a good sound.”³²³ He felt compelled to demonstrate the sound, so he retrieved a rasp, playing it as he continued. “And if there’s about six people using it, and with different sizes, you can hear *real nice sound*, you know, and you can hear it. And they start going and you can hear it *real* good. *Real* nice sound.”³²⁴ The sound, according to Frances Miguel and J. Richard Haefer, is associated with rain and wind.³²⁵ Haefer classifies these sticks as a “song maker,” like the flute. According to Russell, these sticks were used in Akimel O’odham rain ceremonies, and therefore usually spoken of as “rain sticks.”³²⁶

Like flutes and so-called “calendar sticks,” the past and past journeys can also become embedded into these scraping sticks made of greasewood or ironwood as they are transformed through use. However, not only history, but also journeys to far away places, accumulate in these sticks through scraping. “After repeated performances,” according to Darling and Lewis, “the spiritual essence of the songs becomes part of the scraping sticks used to perform them. Even when the sticks are no longer used, they retain this spirituality and should be handled respectfully.”³²⁷ Like calendar sticks, scraping sticks also have markings etched into the wood. Although Donald Bahr calls these markings

³²³ sl_3.1

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Haefer, *Musical Thought in Papago Culture*, 296-297.

³²⁶ Russell, *The Pima Indians* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1980 [1908]), 167.

³²⁷ Darling and Lewis, “Songscapes and Calendar Sticks,” 136.

o'ohon, or “writing,” Darling and Lewis call these markings *o'ohadag*, or “song flowers.” For Darling and Lewis, these “song flowers,”

[A]re representations of the spiritual presence of the songs in these instruments, obtained through their use in performances. The designs are not strictly decorations but are emblematic of the singers' spiritual accomplishment, particularly the song journey....song marks appear on the rasping sticks only when the performance is completed. The designs on rasps document spiritual song journeys in geographic space, whereas calendar sticks provide a temporal or chronological itinerary – a time line – relating the present to the past. This is an important distinction between O'odham systems of geographical and historical reckoning.³²⁸

Crucially, not only do the songs themselves become embedded in these sticks, but the places mentioned in these songs that evoke a sense of movement and journey across the landscape in these songs also accumulate, becoming embedded in these sticks through their continual use. These “song flowers,” document song journeys, evoking journeys – whether in body or the imagination – that the singer has made previously. Like the owner of these sticks, these sticks themselves become well-travelled, storied, placed, and marked by the landscape.

Moreover, as Swanson has previously said of calendar sticks and their owners, they mutually become “seasoned,” or “well-weathered.” Simon agreed that these designs could document previous journeys through geographical space, and as such they held the enduring past within them.

SL: These are Greasewood. These are *hard*. Very hard. It's not gonna break, like Ocotillo, or Mesquite tree, and things like that. This is just like uh *Ironwood*, but *Ironwood is heavy*. Greasewood is not heavy. And it's *hard*. It's not gonna break. It's gonna last for *years*. I have some that belongs to my late Grandpa. And he's using it for a *long* time.³²⁹

³²⁸ Ibid., 136-137.

³²⁹ sl_3.1

Like his *Ma:kai* grandfather, his grandfather's scraping sticks are strong and durable, evoking his presence and power through the continued endurance of his hardened greasewood rasps. Therefore, much like flutes and calendar sticks, these scraping sticks hold an accumulated past within them, a past that evokes memories of previous journeys and movements.

Walking Sticks: U:s and Iagta

As the preceding discussion of flutes, calendar sticks, and scraping sticks illustrates, songs (see chapter two) are not the only O'odham means of evoking memories of the past and memories of previous journeys. In this regard, staffs are much like songs, just as songs are much like staffs, as one Akimel O'odham old man once told George Herzog: "songs are a good bracing-stick to go through life with."³³⁰ The significance of these staffs is particularly important, though, because as I previously mentioned, O'odham staffs or walking sticks have somehow eluded the ethnographic gaze. For example, Frank Russell's otherwise extensive inventory of O'odham artifacts makes no mention of O'odham walking sticks.³³¹ In the conversation featured below, Simon Lopez stated that anthropologists are not alone in neglecting and misunderstanding these staffs.

SL: Right now, a lot of these *young* people, you know, they *think* that *only the old people* uses [staffs] for the cane, for their *cane*! You know, because they're old and they have to have that cane, but is not [a cane]! There's a lot of ways that people use those walking sticks.³³²

³³⁰ George Herzog, "Music in the Thinking of the American Indian," *Peabody Bulletin* (May 1938), 12.

³³¹ Russell, *The Pima Indians*.

³³² sl_3.1

Simon's concern here is that younger O'odham think these staffs are merely canes, or to put it another way, that they are used only by elderly O'odham who need them in order to avoid falling while walking. Simon explained that previous generations used walking sticks far more widely than they are today. When asked if he noticed any changes between how walking sticks were used in previous generations and how those who walk to Magdalena use them today, he responded:

SL: *They don't really understand what it is....And so that's why they don't consider the walking sticks as important as it is. Now days, the young people...most of them think that the only people that uses [them] is the old people, and so they don't use it. But there is ways, you know, that they could use. So I guess that's the only thing, that the difference is that they don't use it anymore until they start the walk to Magdalena....But it's been used before, but a lot of these young, you know, they don't know about it. So I guess that would be the only thing, you know, why it's not used, it's because they don't know yet. They didn't know what it was for.*³³³

To borrow Simon's words, then, the goal for this chapter is to understand what this stick is, what it is for, how it can be used, and why it is important. In short, the goal is to understand why these sticks are not merely canes.

In the O'odham language, staffs or walking sticks are typically spoken of in two ways, either as *u:s* or *iagta*. According to ethnobiologist Amadeo Rea, *u:s* may be used to refer to an entire tree.³³⁴ In their dictionary entry for the word, Dean Saxton, Lucille Saxton, and Susie Enos also translate *u:s* (rendered in their orthography as *uhs*) as "a tree; a bush; a stick; a crutch; wood."³³⁵ Don Bahr who translates *u:s* as "stick," notes that *u:s*

³³³ sl_3.1

³³⁴ Amadeo M. Rea, *At the Desert's Green Edge: An Ethnobotany of the Gila River Pima* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1997), 157.

³³⁵ Dean Saxton, Lucille Saxton, Susie Enos, *Dictionary: Tohono O'odham/Pima to English-English to Tohono O'odham/Pima* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1983), 54.

may refer to a tree's trunk, its branches, or even twigs.³³⁶ But if Bahr is correct in stating that *u:s* refers to “a length of wood in its natural state,” then it might be said that O'odham staffs or walking sticks – especially when referred to as *iagta* rather than *u:s* – are lengths of wood in a cultural state, transformed by O'odham use. Crucially, the O'odham in this study almost always referred to these peripatetic lengths of wood in the O'odham language not as *u:s*, but as *iagta*, and in English not as sticks, but rather as staffs.

Saxton, Saxton, and Enos translate *iagta* as “a propitiating gift” and “an article for the harvest ceremony [*Wi:gita*].” In the context of translating devil songs with David Kozak, David Lopez explained that *iagta* “means something like devil's things, medicine man things, the devil's tools. You know, like a feather or rock, a crystal, the things that a shaman uses.”³³⁷ These translations of *iagta* focus on an object's use in the context of traditional O'odham religious practice. But these translations do not explain why many O'odham would refer to a staff as *iagta*? The key to understanding how the category of *iagta* might include staffs could hinge on their use in a ceremonial context as well as the notion of *iagta* as a gift, or sacrifice. As Verlon Carlos Jose explained,

VCJ: I was given this staff by the late Felix Antone...It was just a stick [*u:s*]. It was a piece of wood. But like I always say, “This is your *iagta*.”³³⁸

³³⁶ Donald Bahr, “Ages of O'odham Architecture,” *Journal of the Southwest* 47:3 (2005), 499.

³³⁷ David L. Kozak and David I. Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs: Tohono O'odham Poetics* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999), 135.

³³⁸ vcj_3.1

Having just introduced an O’odham term, he went on to define it and explain how the term might apply to a staff.

VCJ: *Iagta* is like, uh, to make an offering, to give something, you use it to pray with. As I mentioned, [your] staff would become very handy when you go out for days, helps to keep you balance, helps to keep you walk, but more so, it becomes a sacred item. It becomes, uh, a religious artifact of yours. It becomes whatever you want it to become.³³⁹

Verlon seems to suggest that the description of his staff as “just a stick,” or “a piece of wood” is somehow inappropriate, or potentially disrespectful. Instead, he insists that he must always exhort young people by telling them, “This is your *iagta*,” – which he pointedly calls a “staff,” and not a “stick,” or *u:s* – which “becomes a sacred item” or “religious artifact.” Although Verlon’s staff was given to him as a gift from Felix, Verlon also stressed that the stick that became his staff was once a living thing that sacrificed its life for his benefit. “To other people,” Verlon distance his own position from that of hypothetical others, ““Ah, it’s just a piece of wood.”” Unlike this perspective, Verlon insists that his staff “gave its life for me and I have to protect it. I have to treat it like that, because it gave its life for me.”

In the attempt to “really understand what it is,” in Simon Lopez’s words, Peter Pels’s conception of “materiality” as “a quality of relationship rather than a thing in itself” is a useful analytic framework for understanding the relationship between O’odham walkers and their staffs, or walking sticks.³⁴⁰ Moreover, following Pels, once materiality is conceived of relationally, or as particular modes of relation, it becomes

³³⁹ vej_3.1

³⁴⁰ Peter Pels, “The Modern Fear of Matter: Reflections on the Protestantism of Victorian Science,” *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art and Belief* 4:3 (2008), 264-283.

possible to begin to see how these relations may vary. Or, as Verlon Carlos Jose has said of the indeterminate relation between walkers and their staffs, “It becomes whatever you want it to become.”

On Receiving Staffs: Processes of Identification and Disidentification

Much like O’odham walkers themselves, sticks are not all the same. Sticks vary by shape, size, color, weight, and strength, among other attributes. In his discussion of the “Age of Sticks” in O’odham architecture, Bahr suggests that sticks may be “long,” “short,” “thick,” or “thin.” Most O’odham walkers consulted are keen on identifying these and other differences, evaluating their attributes, and seeking an adequate fit between walkers and their staffs. As Verlon Carlos Jose explains, “The staffs come in many different shapes, sizes. Some are big, some are small, some are skinny, some are fat.”³⁴¹ These distinctions are important, especially when walkers don’t perceive a good match between themselves and their staff.

Verlon’s son, Kendall – a robust, full-bodied O’odham man in his mid-twenties – described the first staff that he received when he was about 14 or 15 years old as “a little skinny.”³⁴² Having arrived late at Felix Antone’s place in Pozo Verde that year, there were only about two sticks to choose between. Kendall explained, “So, I went to pick my staff up....And they were the *real little, skinny, skinny, skinny ones*. And this one I thought was gonna break! My first year [staff] was *real thin*. It was like a *twig*! It was about, see, about the size of a quarter. It was *real skinny*.” Indeed, the relative size of

³⁴¹ vej_3.1

³⁴² kj_3.1

Kendall's staff was not only a matter of concern to Kendall, but also to others, including Felix, who according to Kendall, asked him, "'Are you sure it's gonna *handle* you?'To be honest, that one couldn't hold my weight if I tried. So you know, he made a comment....' *You should have got something bigger,*' you know, '*more your size.*'" So the next year, Kendall arrived at Felix's earlier and got another staff that he described as "a lot *thicker* and *stronger*."

When Mary Narcho was asked what she most remembered from her five years of walking to Magdalena, she said, "my main memory of my walk is this staff." Like Kendall, she acquired her staff at Felix's place in Pozo Verde during her first year as a walker.

MN: They had this big pile of staffs laying there. I remember that I went over and I kind of put one aside because that was the one that I wanted. So we were in this long line getting ready to get our staffs...*and somebody went and got that staff and I was so disappointed.* And then somebody said to me, "*You're not supposed to pick out your own staff. You take what they give you* [laughing]." ³⁴³

According to the intervening "somebody" who reprimanded her, Mary's staff had to be given to her, rather than chosen by her. This inevitably resulted in her initial disappointment when she was given an unsavory staff that seemed inadequate for its purpose. Mary continued:

MN: Well, when it got to be my turn, they gave me this *little, tiny, skinny staff* [laughing] *and they gave it to me and it had little tiny – I guess that was termite holes? – all over it,* and I thought, "*Well, I can't lean on this thing, it would break!*" But I swear that was the *strongest staff*. I mean I leaned on that thing *all those years* and it's just as *strong* today. *And it's just a little skinny, ugly, ugly little staff.* ³⁴⁴

³⁴³ mn_1.1

³⁴⁴ mn_1.1

Mary was disappointed with her staff at first, particularly noting how scrawny it looked. Mary went on to explain, “A lot of the staffs were white and they were *fatter*. Some were *real fat*. [laughing] Mine was real skinny and ah, *it looked like it was going to break any day*.” Mary hastened to add, though, “*It never did*.” Strong, yet riddled with small holes and covered with cracks, Mary eventually came to identify with her staff. Mary focused intently on her staff, slowly twirling it in her hand as she spoke:

MN: I was really looking at my staff one day when we were on our rest break and I was thinking ah, that this kind of symbolizes my *life*. I had a very hard life. I went through a lot of hard hard times, a lot of um...I don't really want to say suffering, but just hard times; *and it looks like the staff went through a lot of hard times too!* [laughing] And maybe that was why it was given to me. This kind of symbolizes my *life*. All the ups and downs that I had. And maybe that's why I was supposed to and that's another reason that it's special to me.³⁴⁵

Through the gradual process of walking, thinking, and maturing with her staff, Mary clearly came to identify very closely with her staff and its ability to endure “all the ups and downs” of life just like she had. Once a termite ridden stick that she had seen as “*a little skinny, ugly, ugly little staff*,” she eventually came to see her staff, both metaphorically and metonymically, as something like an extension of herself.

Holy Ribbons: “Every Ribbon is a Journey”

O’odham often refer to the ribbons tied onto their staffs as “holy ribbons.” In O’odham, these “holy ribbons” are sometimes called *ke:lan li:ste*, which is derived from the Spanish *curan listón*, meaning “curing ribbon” or “healing ribbon.” But what is the

³⁴⁵ mn_1.1

difference between an ordinary ribbon and a “holy ribbon”? Verlon Carlos Jose explained the difference as follows:

VCJ: This ribbon is no different than a ribbon you’ll go buy in the store. If you scientifically look into it, they’re probably both made up of the same thing. What sets it aside, is this holy ribbon has come from *Mali:na*. This has come from *Mali:na*; this has been taken to the church; this has been taken to Saint Francis; and asked Saint Francis to offer prayer; and to offer guidance; and to help us on our journeys; been blessed by the Holy Water; when the one on the store has not.³⁴⁶

Essentially, there is no discernible difference between an ordinary ribbon and a “holy ribbon,” other than the fact that the latter are from Magdalena, where they have been blessed by Saint Francis and possibly a priest. Verlon also went on to explain how “holy ribbons,” unlike ordinary ribbons, are not only highly respected but also sought after by O’odham.

VCJ: I could get a bunch of ribbon and sell them to people and they won’t buy them here. But if you know when people go to *Mali:na*, now they’re buying these ribbons at, you know, five for \$1. I could set up a shop here in Sells and they probably won’t sell because we’re not in *Mali:na*, because we’re not at the church. [But,] we could set up a shop and say, “Oh, these holy ribbons have been blessed and taken down to Saint Francis,” and so forth, and probably they would now sell. It’s the idea of going somewhere to retrieve them. For us, every ribbon is a journey we’ve made.³⁴⁷

In contrast to Verlon’s understanding in which “every ribbon is a journey,” he recounted another use in which a single journey resulted in countless ribbons. Even in the spur of the moment, Verlon anonymized the identity and even the gender of this individual, whom Verlon consistently refers to in the third person plural, “they”:

³⁴⁶ vcj_3.1

³⁴⁷ vcj_3.1

VCJ: I've seen one person walking around *Mali:na* and they have a bunch of ribbon on their staff, but I think that was that person's first time walking. They just come down and just got a bunch of ribbons, tied them on there. I don't know. And that's okay. I guess that's okay. If that's what they want to do, to beautify their sacred item, then that's, you know, that's okay. Um, but to each is their own.³⁴⁸

Although Verlon clearly wanted to adopt a tolerant stance toward this different mode of relating to the ribbons on one's staff, the practice he describes – of buying rather than earning ribbons in order to have more ribbons and a more beautiful staff – demonstrates how highly many O'odham regard ribbons and particularly the labor through which they are normally acquired: walking to Magdalena. Instead of going to Magdalena to get “a bunch of ribbons,” Verlon stated that at least for Felix's walkers:

VCJ: They usually tell you, “Don't put anything on there. Don't put anything on there until you get [to Magdalena] and make your first journey.” The first things that we put on that staff was the holy ribbons we're given the first year you walked for holy ribbons. And then every year thereafter you get one.³⁴⁹

With the three exceptions that 1) new walkers are often given three ribbons in the first year, and 2) ribbons are easily acquired in Magdalena, and 3) O'odham regularly like to “honor” one another by giving ribbons to people who have done something significant for the people, “every ribbon is a journey.”

History and Memory in Staffs

Regardless of how O'odham decorate their staffs, they almost always seem to record history, or at least the number of times that the stick and its walker have made the

³⁴⁸ vcj_3.1

³⁴⁹ vcj_3.1

journey to Magdalena together. As Verlon Carlos Jose previously stated, “For us, every ribbon is a journey we’ve made.” Because each ribbon is a journey, these ribbons evoke memories of previous journeys and invoke the power and presence of *Mali:na* wherever they may be. Speaking about his staff, Verlon stated: “It reminds me of the journey to *Mali:na*. It reminds of the journeys I’ve taken.”³⁵⁰

Mary Narcho also explained how the ribbons on her staff evoke memories of both walking to Magdalena in different years and Felix Antone. Eager to display her staff, she ran to her home altar in her bedroom to retrieve her it. When she returned, her hands gently caressed the staff and she tenderly ran her fingers through the ribbons and her “finger rosaries” with which she always said the rosary while she was walking to Magdalena. Mary explained the two different ways that her ribbons record history and evoke her memories of previous journeys to Magdalena:

MN: I think I have eight or nine ribbons on here, but these first four, they were all put on by Felix. And on this yellow one, every year I would put another knot to show how many years I made it. And um, I made it five years and so I have five knots on here. My fourth year, I thought it would be my last so I went and I bought four ribbons and I added four ribbons on it. But the first four are the ones that Felix put on and now they’re very special to me since he’s...since he’s gone.³⁵¹

Essentially, Mary has recorded history with three different methods. In the first method, she each ribbon reminds her of a particular journey. In the second method, each equally spaced knot on a yellow ribbon marks the number of journeys she has made to Magdalena. In the third method, thinking her fourth year would be her final year, as it is customary to walk to Magdalena for four consecutive years if possible, she memorialized

³⁵⁰ vcj_3.1

³⁵¹ mn_1.1

the completion of her four years by adding four more ribbons. Although the last two methods of recording history seem to have been her own way of remembering her accomplishment, the first method, in which each ribbon represents a journey is particularly meaningful in retrospect since these were the only ribbons that were personally tied onto her staff by Felix, who gave the staff to her in order to begin with. These four ribbons evoke memories of Felix and his absence, but tied as they were on her staff by Felix, they also invoke his enduring presence.

Mary Ann Ramirez, of Tucson, similarly handled her staff with care. Looking at the well-worn ribbons on her staff and tactilely experiencing their sheer physicality, they also gradually evoked memories of the walk for her. Her speech below illustrates how her ribbons eventually brought back memories of Felix as well as thoughts of the imminent future when his absence would be visibly noticed in the coming year's journey to Magdalena.

SS: Is there anything on your staff that brings back memories?

MAR: Um, no. Maybe. I don't know. I guess when I look at them [the ribbons], they're kinda getting ratty, like these here. The tips are getting old and then some of them are kinda... I have to tie knots in them. That way they won't start coming apart, so I have to tie knots in them. But I guess, um, I would say probably just the ones with the knots because they've been with me all this time and the ones without the knots are, I guess they're doing okay, but no, not really. I guess maybe now, now when I think about it, you know, I guess maybe Felix tied all of them on here and now, this year, he's not going to see them. He's not here anymore and, um, that will be different, you know, 'cause all of these, he's tied them. I guess that would be something to remind me of this, knowing that Felix tied all of these ribbons.³⁵²

³⁵² mar_1.1

Mary Ann Ramirez's knots are distinctly not the same as Mary Narcho's knots. Whereas Mary's equally spaced knots marked five consecutive years of journeys to Magdalena, Mary Ann's knots are intended to keep her fraying ribbons from completely unraveling. "Kinda getting ratty," and "getting old," Mary Ann's ribbons have clearly seen many journeys, not only to Magdalena, but to wherever else she takes her staff. But amidst all of her wearing ribbons, one of them in particular stood out among the rest: a lone black ribbon. This black ribbon evokes the presence and memory of the dead.

MAR: I have one black ribbon on here, and the black ribbon represents, um, my Mom who passed away, my friend who died from cancer, and, um, and I guess probably now, all the other people who have passed away since I've been walking. So that's one that I believe I put on. All the other ribbons are, you know, are the ones that Felix tied on there.³⁵³

The black ribbon evokes the presence and memory of the dead. And yet, at the same time, all of the other ribbons, and therefore the staff as a whole as well, evoke loving memories of the recently deceased Felix Antone.

Walkers and their Staffs

As discussed previously, staffs, and particularly ribbons, can evoke memories both of previous journeys to Magdalena and of Felix. But how might these staffs themselves be regarded as sentient beings that should be treated with respect? "That's why you have to take care of them the way that you do," Mary Narcho began her explanation.

MN: Every year, you know, I dust the staffs and it's always standing next to my little altar. Because it's so sacred to me and so special to me. You take care of it like you would yourself or your child because it got me

³⁵³ mar_1.1

through five years of leaning on it and walking with it. And everything that I went through in those five years, this staff was right there beside me and it was helping me to make it.³⁵⁴

After a brief pause, Mary pensively added, “I leaned on it...and maybe it leaned on me.”

Like a member of her own family, Mary cares for her staffs and stands them up next to her saints. Leaning on her staff for five years, they mutually depended on one another as they experienced the struggles and joys of walking to Magdalena together. Like Mary, most O’odham walkers practice a relational materiality, or material rationality, in which they seem to relate to their staffs in patterned ways that are either respectful or disrespectful.

Kendall Jose explained that a staff should be treated like a person.

KJ: *You take care of it as if it is a person, you know. You know, we don’t leave it behind. Don’t just leave it laying around on the ground. I know we always tell the kids along the road, “Don’t be playing with them like swords,” you know....If you don’t use it right, it can hurt you, meaning, if you’re disrespectful to the item, you know, it’ll hurt you.*³⁵⁵

When asked to elaborate on what he meant by taking care of a staff as though it were a person, Kendall described how and why he takes care of his family’s staffs in their home altar throughout the year:

KJ: *It being a person: You take care of it; it takes care of you. The way I take care of my staff...keep it inside the house with our altar, the saints, and everything. Stand ‘em right there and time-to-time take ‘em, set ‘em outside, and get that air, get some sun. And occasionally, you know, [with raised pitch] sprinkle some water. You know, [with raised pitch] just little things like that. They say to offer it some food.*³⁵⁶

³⁵⁴ mn_1.1

³⁵⁵ kj_2.1

³⁵⁶ kj_3.1

Kendall stands his family's staffs next to standing and reclining saints in the altar inside of his home, like additional members of the family. Moreover, like the saints – who don't like being cooped up all of the time and like to have feasting, singing, and dancing from time to time – staffs need to go outside from time to time to take in the air, the sun, as well as food and drink.

Like Kendall, without any leading questions, Royetta Thomas of San Miguel described her staff as being "like a person." Having brought up the subject of staffs in her own narrative, she was asked to elaborate.

SS: Can you tell me more about the staffs?

RT: They're like your backbone, your backbone, that will carry you on, like a helper. You respect it. It's like a person. You don't just leave it laying around anywhere. It's given to you for a reason. [Coughs] That's what I was told. I keep mine by my saints, so it's there.³⁵⁷

Having stated that a staff is like a person and that it is to be respected as such, Royetta was asked how she shows respect to her staff. She explained that she occasionally brushes hers off, burns cedar for it, and takes her staff with her to different events. Since I did not completely understand what she meant by stating that her staff was like a person, she was asked to elaborate.

SS: You said that the staff is like a person.

RT: Mmhmm [affirmative].

SS: Can you, um, expand on that at all?

RT: If you start throwing your staff around and everything, you're hurting it too. All the elements that are taken from different plants and all that, they're all beings. You don't just take it and disrespect it. It helps you. It heals you. You meditate with them. It takes care of you. That's why you

³⁵⁷ rt_1.2

respect it and treat it like a person...If I didn't take care of it, you know, it's gonna come back on me. Only time will tell.³⁵⁸

Much like walkers themselves, staffs can get hurt. Royetta stressed that staffs can either help you and heal you or make you sick. As with other forms of sickness outlined by Donald Bahr, Juan Gregorio, David I. Lopez, and Albert Alvarez in their study of O'odham theories of sickness, "playing," or "playing around" is a disrespectful offence that is usually paired with "sickness." When children play with their staffs, spinning them around, pounding with them, throwing them, or "sword fighting" with them, they are quickly reprimanded. On the rare occasion in which an adult is perceived as "playing" with their staff, they too might be reprimanded.

Although most O'odham in the study stated that staffs may be treated in a variety of ways, they also consistently stated that staffs should not be played with. For example, Simon Lopez explained,

SL: The only thing that is no good, is when you *play with it*, start playing with your walking stick, instead of using it *like you're supposed to*. And I think that's the only thing that is no good, is when you play with it, and don't take care of it like you're supposed to. A lot of times there's uh people that *don't care*, you know, they just leave it somewhere, so somebody – kids, or things like that – will get it and, you know, misuse it. And that's no good.³⁵⁹

If caring for one's staff shows respect, then "playing with" one's staff shows disrespect, as though "playing with" were synonymous with "not taking care of" and "misusing" in this usage. Simon was asked about the potential consequences of these actions.

³⁵⁸ rt_1.2

³⁵⁹ sl_3.1

SS: And what are some of the things that might happen if you're playing with that stick, or you just leave it somewhere unattended? What are some of the risks of doing that?

SL: There is a lot of things, you know, that they do. If the kids get it, and take, lose it somewhere, or throw it away somewhere, and things like that. And a lot of times they say *there is sickness that you can get because you're not taking care of this*, you know.³⁶⁰

Like other beings with wills whom are capable of being offended discussed in Bahr's study of O'odham theories of sickness, staffs – or walking sticks – can cause sickness to O'odham with whom they have a relationship.

This returns us to the question posed in the introduction to this chapter, that is, what is the relationship between walkers and their sticks? Following Tod Swanson, this chapter suggests that as seasons pass, O'odham become seasoned and sticks get storied. Storied sticks and seasoned characters then, are the results of the productive labor of walking to Magdalena. Ideally, walkers become attached to their sticks and identify with them because they have endured much together and helped one another. However, it is also clear that relationships between walkers and their sticks can be less than ideal, as demonstrated by undisciplined actions – such as thoughtlessly “playing with” a staff, or forgetting where one's staff is and leaving it unattended and uncared for – actions that might result in sickness.

At the end of the last recorded conversation, Verlon Carlos Jose explained, “You don't walk around, and drink beer, and do whatever with these staffs. It's not what they're meant to be. Yet, some young people would do that.”³⁶¹ In short, from Verlon's

³⁶⁰ sl_3.1; sl_3.2.

³⁶¹ vcj_3.1

understanding, these staffs are meant for journeys, not aimless wandering and distraction-seeking; they get thirsty and need water, not beer. These sticks – whether or not they are persons in and of themselves – make persons who are placed and places that are personed. Staffs *can* aid in the gradual production of “Real People.” But, of course, there are other modes of relating to one’s staff as well. Without elicitation, Verlon related two ways of relating with one’s staff that came to his mind as being particularly disrespectful.

VCJ: I was told that there was one person who was running around, breaking all their windows in their home with their staff. It’s very disrespectful. I was told there was a young girl who didn’t want to have her staff anymore and she was gonna break it. And I was asked to go talk to her, and she said that staff does nothing for her. I talked to her and told her, “It’s not gonna [do] anything for you. It’s not gonna cure you. It doesn’t have magical powers. It could, but that depends on you. That depends on you and what you put into it that it gets its power from.”³⁶²

Whether they are used respectfully or not, these staffs accumulate years of thoughts and actions in relation to their walkers. History is embedded in these objects, but these objects hold different histories within them: the histories-in-the-making of walkers who are themselves persons-in-the-making, journeying to and through places-in the making.

Summary

As Darling and Lewis have previously shown, scraping sticks encode geographical knowledge (though this too is historical, see chapter two), while calendar sticks encode historical knowledge (this too, is also geographical, since calendar sticks tend to be village-based). For O’odham walkers with their walking sticks, Magdalena, Saint Francis, and all of the blessings associated with them are never too far away. And

³⁶² vcj_3.1

the memories of these journeys that they have taken with their sticks and the stories that they, together, tell inextricably link walkers and their sticks, sticks and stories, people and places, as well as the past and the present. Thus, Magdalena is palpably present in the everyday lives of the walkers who cannot help but be transported by their sticks to stories – whether told or untold – and memories made along the road to Magdalena as well as dreams of future journeys.

CHAPTER 4

WALKING TO MAGDALENA: *HIM* (“WALKING”) AND *HIMDAG* (“CULTURE”)

When he [Christ] walked among his people, he walked everywhere. He walked from community to community. [Christ] never, you know, rode anything. He was always *on foot*. He did everything on foot. And you know, he didn't really have a house. He did everything on foot and he prayed, you know. He healed. That's what this journey, you know, kind of, represents. That we can be that if we want to be. We can be in that kind of realm, I guess, as Christ walked in. And that's what this journey, especially with the prayer, is really about.

- Louis Anthony (a.k.a. “Tony”) Lopez, remembering Felix Antone's Teachings about the Pilgrimage to Magdalena.³⁶³

At that time there was no puberty celebration....The first time they had the celebration the people liked it. But some women did only that all the time. It wrecked their homes and no one wanted them. People called them “homeless women”, because they ran around and had no home. They wandered everywhere in the country and finally went to a powerful medicine woman. When they arrived, they told her to do something to them so they would soon find rest from their homeless condition.

- “The Pleiades (Homeless Women) Appear,” as recorded by Juan Dolores.³⁶⁴

Introduction

Pilgrimage has long been the focus of much attention in both academic and popular literature about Tohono O'odham.³⁶⁵ However, most O'odham refer to the trek to

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³⁶⁴ Juan Dolores, “The Pleiades (Homeless Women) Appear” in Dean and Lucille Saxton, *O'otham Hoho'ok A'agitha: Legends and Lore of the Papago and Pima Indians* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press), 1973: 24-25.

³⁶⁵ Although this list is far from being exhaustive, a few noteworthy examples follow: Donald M. Bahr, “Pima-Papago Christianity,” *Journal of the Southwest* 33:4 (1988), 133-67; Ted De Grazia, “Papago Pilgrimage,” *Arizona Highways* 35:10 (1959), 10-13; Henry F. Dobyns, “Papago Pilgrims on the Town,” *Kiva* 16:1/2 1950, 27-32; Henry F. Dobyns, *The Religious Festival* (Ithaca: Cornell University Department of Anthropology Dissertation, 1960); Henry F. Dobyns, “Do-It-Yourself Religion: The Diffusion of Folk Catholicism on Mexico's Northern Frontier 1821-46,” *Pilgrimage in Latin America*, N. Ross Crumrine and Alan Morinis, eds., (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 53-67; Juan Dolores, *Autobiography*, Part One,

Magdalena as either “the walk” in English, or *him* or *himdag* in O’odham.³⁶⁶ In lieu of perpetuating “pilgrimage,” focusing on the physicality of “walking” and the conceptual notions of what it means “to be a good walker” as expressed in O’odham narrative discourse is useful for scholars interested in moving away from static notions of “culture” toward more sophisticated notions of “culture” as dynamic, processual, dialectical, living, and in motion. Indeed, the category of “movement” has long been at the forefront of pilgrimage studies, at least since Alan Morinis’s declaration that movement is the essence of pilgrimage.³⁶⁷

Manuscript in Bancroft Library Archives, University of California, Berkeley, 14-15; Juan Dolores and Madeleine Mathiot, “The Reminiscences of Juan Dolores, an Early O’odham Linguist,” *Anthropological Linguistics* 33:3 (1991), 307; Bernard L. Fontana, “Pilgrimage to Magdalena,” *The American West* 18:5 (1981), 40-45, 60; Bernard L. Fontana, “Pilgrimage to San Xavier,” *Arizona Highways* 62:11 (1986), 44-48, inside back cover; David D. Gaillard, “The Papago of Arizona and Sonora,” *American Anthropologist* 7:3 (1894), 296; Jacques Galinier, “From Montezuma to San Francisco: The Wi:gita Ritual in Papago (Tohono O’odham) Religion,” Adelaide Bahr and Donald Bahr, trans., *Journal of the Southwest* 33:4 (1991), 486-538; Sam D. Gill, *Native American Religions: An Introduction* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2005), 74-78; James S. Griffith, “Magdalena Revisited: The Growth of a Fiesta,” *The Kiva* 33:2 (1967), 82-86; William S. King, *The Folk Catholicism of the Tucson Papagos* (Tucson: University of Arizona Department of Anthropology Thesis, 1954); David L. Kozak and David I. Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs: Tohono O’odham Poetics* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999); Francis Manuel and Deborah Neff, *Desert Indian Woman: Stories and Dreams* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2001); Gary Paul Nabhan, *The Desert Smells Like Rain: A Naturalist in Papago Indian Country* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1982); Mary I. O’Connor, “The Pilgrimage to Magdalena,” *Anthropology of Religion: A Handbook*, Steven D. Glazier, ed., (Westport: Praeger, 1999), 369-89; Eileen Oktavec, *Answered Prayers: Miracles and Milagros along the Border* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995); Kenneth M. Stewart, “Southern Papago Salt Pilgrimages,” *The Masterkey for Indian Lore and History* 39:3 (1965), 84-91; Ruth M. Underhill, *Papago Indian Religion* (New York: AMS Press, 1969 [1946]); Ruth Underhill, “Intercultural Relations in the Greater Southwest,” *American Anthropologist* 56:4 (1954), 649.

³⁶⁶ For example, see Bernard Siquieros, “The Magdalena Pilgrimage: In My Own Words,” *We:sii T-we:m: All of Us Together*. Tohono O’odham Nation Executive Newsletter 2 (2009), 3; Frank Lewis and Donald Bahr, “Whither T-himdag,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 8:1 (1992), 70-90.

³⁶⁷ In particular, see Alan Morinis, “Introduction: The Territory of the Anthropology of Pilgrimage,” *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, Alan Morinis, ed., (Westport, CT and London: Greenwood Press, 1992: 15); Alan Morinis, “Persistent Peregrination: From Sun Dance to Catholic Pilgrimage Among Canadian Prairie Indians,” *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, Alan Morinis, ed., (Westport, CT and London: Greenwood Press, 1992: 113); as well as Simon Coleman and John Eade, eds. *Reframing Pilgrimage: Cultures in Motion* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004); see also Anne Feldhaus, *Connected Places: Region, Pilgrimage, and Geographical Imagination in India* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 28; and Anne Feldhaus, “Walking and Thinking,” *Mārga: Ways of*

O’odham understandings of walking to Magdalena are grounded within wider O’odham conceptions of movement. Findings from this study show that much about “walking” and “being a good walker” or a “good” Tohono O’odham is about maintaining proper kinship relations with one’s kin as well as with other entities in nature. As such, these relations seem to follow the same principles whether one is encountering one’s grandmother, a “saint” in one’s home altar, village church, or even in Magdalena, or a deceased cowboy “devil.” Indeed, these “saints” are not necessarily “saintly” and these devils are not particularly “diabolical,” but both entities are regarded as capable of causing harm and “sickness” to those who mistreat them and their property.³⁶⁸ Walking – or, to be more precise, a particular O’odham way of walking – is instrumental in the incremental production of *siakam*, an O’odham notion of maturity pertaining to “ripening” or “ripeness.” Ruth Underhill translates *siakam* as “ripe man,” and Dean Saxton et al. translate the term as “hero,” or “one who has endured.”³⁶⁹ Saxton et al. also translate *si* as “real, genuine; ultimate; of good character; precise, very,” so if *O’odham* means something like “people,” or “person” in the plural, then *siakam* means something like “real people,” those ripened, matured, modest individuals who exude O’odhamness.

Liberation, Empowerment, and Social Change in Maharashtra, E. Naito, I. Shima, and H. Kotani, eds. (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors, 2008), 452.

³⁶⁸ Donald M. Bahr, Juan Gregorio, David I. Lopez, and Albert Alvarez, *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sickness (Ká:cim Múmkidag)* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1981 [1973]); David L. Kozak and David I. Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs: Tohono O’odham Poetics* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999).

³⁶⁹ Ruth Underhill, *Papago Indian Religion*, 20; Ruth Murray Underhill, *Social Organization of the Papago Indians* (New York: AMS Press, 1969 [1939]), 45-46; Dean Saxton, Lucille Saxton, Susie Enos, *Dictionary: Tohono O’odham/Pima to English-English to Tohono O’odham/Pima* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1983), 54.

Siakam, as pinnacles of O’odhamness, are inextricably linked to what it means “to be a good walker.”

In the opening epigraph to this chapter, Louis Lopez explained how one of Felix Antone’s teachings was that those O’odham who walk to Magdalena are walking in Christ’s footsteps. However, in purposefully moving through the landscape on foot toward Magdalena, O’odham may also find themselves on a path toward becoming a “real person” as they become more familiar with, and are in turn shaped by, the places through which they move. One example is the productive juxtaposition of Louis Lopez’s homeless Christ, who according to Felix Antone is temporarily and productively imitated by O’odham walkers on their way to Magdalena, and the story of the Homeless Women who were transformed into the Pleiades as recorded by Juan Dolores.³⁷⁰

The story of how the Pleiades appeared – which are referred to in O’odham as *Cecpa’awi U’uwi* and variously translated English as either Homeless Women, Prostitute Women, Promiscuous Women, or simply the Travellers – tells the origins of O’odham puberty rites. At that time, I’itoi sang beautiful songs, giving them to the people, who in turn sang the songs and danced. The people enjoyed the first puberty celebration, but some enjoyed the celebration too much, seemingly unable to stop singing and dancing. Such undisciplined and frenzied merriment had grave consequences. According to the story, “some women did only that all the time. It wrecked their homes and no one wanted them. People called them ‘homeless women’, because they ran around and had no home.” After wandering everywhere, they finally happened upon a powerful medicine woman

³⁷⁰ Dean and Lucille Saxton, *O’othham Hoho’ok A’agitha: Legends and Lore of the Papago and Pima Indians* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1973), 24-25.

whom they begged to put an end to their homeless, kinless, and displaced condition. The medicine woman acquiesced, saying, “Alright, I’ll do it. I’m going to put you out in plain sight of all. Every evening your relatives will see you and tell their daughters why you were called Homeless Women (the Pleiades). In this way women will know what a good home is. Even though a puberty celebration is enjoyable, no one should go around just doing that.” Having spoken thus, she transformed the women into stone and threw them into the sky where they are now.

Being a good walker is intimately related to the disciplined, sensuous maturity of Tohono O’odham elders, with a life full of experience and a body full of knowledge and skill.³⁷¹ In turn, such disciplined maturity (or the lack thereof) is manifest in the everyday movements of O’odham men and women. These movements include not only walking, but also dancing, as well as cooking and eating. In particular, the embodied practices of walking and dancing are linked in the analysis that follows. As two skillful, foot-wise, embodied knowledges of how to move through the world, dancing and walking are mutually related arts of carrying one’s self that provide exquisite vantage points for viewing, participating in, and analyzing O’odham “kinesthetics” (ways of moving and “kinesthetic ideologies,” or evaluations of movements), that relate aesthetics of particular ways of moving and ethical judgments of value and taste.³⁷² Focusing on walking and dancing together is not unprecedented within pilgrimage studies. Most notably, in his

³⁷¹ I borrow the notion of “disciplined sensuality” from Tod Swanson, “Singing to Estranged Lovers: Runa Relations to Plants in the Ecuadorian Amazon,” *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* (3:1), 2009: 36-65.

³⁷² I borrow these analytic categories from Janet Sturman, “Movement Analysis as a Tool for Understanding Identity: Retentions, Borrowings, and Transformations in Native American *Waila*,” *The World of Music* 39:3 (1997), 51-70.

analysis of a Quechua pilgrimage to Qoyllur Rit'i, Michael J. Sallnow observed that the journey was so pervaded by melody and rhythm that, "the pilgrimage, in a sense, is not so much walked as danced."³⁷³ Insofar as the songs analyzed in chapter two accompany O'odham walkers on their way to Magdalena, it is not unreasonable to suggest that this journey too, is "not so much walked as danced."

Before examining O'odham practices of walking, categories of movement, and narrative discourse that illustrate O'odham kinesthetic ideologies of what is at stake in "being a good walker," this chapter includes a discussion of practice theory as developed by Marcel Mauss, Pierre Bourdieu, Michele de Certeau, Thomas Tweed, Manuel Vásquez, and others in order to highlight the significance of walking as an epistemologically actualizing embodied practice. Moving away from the discussion of practice theory and toward a discussion of O'odham movements or kinesthetics and O'odham kinesthetic ideologies, the analysis draws upon intimate ethnographic observations of O'odham ways of walking as expressed by Ofelia Zepeda, an accomplished O'odham linguist and poet, and Byrd Baylor, a well-known non-native author of fiction with a keen ethnographic eye. Because O'odham ideologies of walking are somewhat underarticulated, this chapter on "walking" takes a brief detour to consider O'odham kinesthetic and kinesthetic ideologies of "dancing" in contemporary *Waila* performances, which have been far more extensively studied by anthropologists than O'odham ways of walking. Once an understanding of O'odham kinesthetics and kinesthetic ideologies has been established, it is appropriate to include discussion of an

³⁷³ Michael J. Sallnow, *Pilgrims of the Andes: Regional Cults in Cusco* (Washington, D.C. and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987), 201.

encounter with O’odham movements and valuations of movement that took place during the participant-observation period of this study. Finally, several O’odham narratives about going to Magdalena and approach an O’odham taxonomy of movements are examined.

This chapter explores the physicality of movement in general with an emphasis on walking in particular. In addition to attending to these actual movements, or kinesthetics, the discussion also includes O’odham discourses on these movements, or kinesthetic ideologies. Here, the observations and experiences from four years of participating in the walk to Magdalena are employed, as well as stories that O’odham told about “good” (*s-ape*) and “no good” (*pi o ape*) (i.e. “bad”) walkers.

Practice Theory: From “Body Techniques” to “Embodied Cosmologies”

Marcel Mauss’s concept of “body techniques,” which he uses to describe “the ways in which from society to society men [sic] know how to use their bodies” foreshadows both Michel Foucault’s “technologies of the self” and Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of “habitus.”³⁷⁴ In addition to noting how habits of swimming had changed in his lifetime and how French and English troops had different techniques of digging that could only be learned painfully and slowly by the other, Mauss also noted, significantly, how French and English walking techniques differed considerably by frequency and stride so that he “could recognize the gait of an Englishman and a Frenchman from a long

³⁷⁴ Marcel Mauss, *Sociology and Psychology: Essays*, Ben Brewster, trans., (London, Boston, and Henley: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1979 [1950]), 97; Michel Foucault, “Technologies of the Self,” *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton, eds., (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 16-49; Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Richard Nice, trans., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977 [1972]), 72-95.

distance.”³⁷⁵ Mauss was particularly struck by a revelation that came to him when he was ill in a New York hospital:

I wondered where previously I had seen girls walking as my nurses walked. I had the time to think about it. At last I realized that it was at the cinema. Returning to France, I noticed how common this gait was, especially in Paris; the girls were French and they too were walking in this way. In fact, American walking fashions had begun to arrive over here, thanks to the cinema.³⁷⁶

Walking figures prominently in Mauss’s exploration of body techniques. He discusses more examples of walking as the quintessential body technique, necessarily acquired, and never natural.³⁷⁷

I think I can also recognize a girl who has been raised in a convent. In general, she will walk with her fists closed. And I can still remember my third-form teacher shouting at me: “Idiot! why do you walk around the whole time with your hands flapping wide open?” *Thus there exists an education in walking, too.*³⁷⁸

Mauss’s analysis of “the techniques of the body” provides a foundation for practice theory upon which Bourdieu later builds, which in turn - at least for the purposes of the present study - provides a vantage point from which practice can be seen as integral to the production of disciplined, mature, “ripe,” or “real people.”³⁷⁹ Already in Mauss, there is a dialectic: tradition is embodied as bodies comport to tradition; tradition forms bodies as bodies make tradition. Moreover, Mauss’s classification of body techniques according to efficiency opens the possibility for further consideration of the connections between the

³⁷⁵ Mauss, *Sociology and Psychology*, 100.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Ibid., 102.

³⁷⁸ Ibid., 100; emphasis added.

³⁷⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 53.

capacity for embodied knowledge (disciplined skills, or practice) and ripeness, since Mauss signals that he is primarily interested in “those people with a sense of the adaptation of all their well-co-ordinated movements to a goal, who are practised, who ‘know what they are up to.’”³⁸⁰

Significantly, as Mauss suggests, and as Bourdieu elaborates on, the embodied knowledges of practice do not necessarily, or easily, rise to the level of discourse.³⁸¹ Taking this dichotomy between discourse and practice to its logical extreme (though it should be noted that Derrida deconstructs the dichotomization of discourse and practice, arguing that discourse *is* a practice), Bourdieu promotes “*learned ignorance*” as a mode of practical knowledge that “can only give rise to a misleading discourse of a speaker himself [sic] misled.”³⁸² For Bourdieu, this “learned ignorance” belongs to “the field of doxa, of that which is taken for granted” when “the established cosmological and political order is perceived not as arbitrary, i.e. as one possible order among others, but as a self-evident and natural order which goes without saying and therefore goes unquestioned.”³⁸³

As Manuel Vásquez notes, Bourdieu’s notion of habitus is useful in the study of embodied religious practices.³⁸⁴ Bourdieu defines habitus as “a system of dispositions” that “designates a *way of being*, a *habitual state* (especially of the body), and, in

³⁸⁰ Ibid., 108.

³⁸¹ Mauss, *Sociology and Psychology*, 105; Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 19, 166.

³⁸² Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 19; Jacques Derrida, “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences,” *Writing and Difference*, Alan Bass, trans., (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005 [1978]), 351-370.

³⁸³ Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 166.

³⁸⁴ Manuel A. Vásquez, *More than Belief: A Materialist Theory of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 241-42.

particular, a *predisposition, tendency, propensity, or inclination*.³⁸⁵ In the context of O’odham pilgrimages to Magdalena, the embodied knowledge of religious practices such as walking to Magdalena is a “practical mastery...transmitted in practice, its practical state, without attaining the level of discourse. The child imitates not ‘models’ but other people’s actions....In all societies, children are particularly attentive to the gestures and postures which, in their eyes, express everything that goes to make an accomplished adult,” including mundane everyday acts such as a way of walking that are grounded in routine bodily dispositions, or what Bourdieu calls “*hexis*.”³⁸⁶

Although O’odham discourses on “walking” are not necessarily “misleading discourse of a speaker himself misled,” as following Bourdieu would have it, walking does seem to be one of those things that usually “goes without saying.”³⁸⁷ In conversations with O’odham elders and walkers, for the most part, findings indicate that O’odham kinesthetics and kinesthetic ideologies of “walking” were often articulated in hesitant, halting, and otherwise unconvincing ways when elicited through leading questions. A way of walking, then, is precisely that which for Bourdieu “*goes without saying because it comes without saying*,” which Michel de Certeau glosses as “a cleverness that does not recognize itself as such.”³⁸⁸ De Certeau extends Bourdieu’s radical distinction between discourse and practice in his memorable and illustrative example of the spatial practices of jaywalking “Walkers in the City”; largely unaware of

³⁸⁵ Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 214, n. 1.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 87.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 19, 166-67.

³⁸⁸ Ibid., 167; Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Steven Rendall, trans., (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1984), 56.

their subversive spatial tactics positioned as they are on the ground, they cut across the grid system of city streets illegibly writing texts with their feet that they cannot read, and which can only be read from high above.³⁸⁹

Because ways of walking tend to be non-discursive, the ethnographer's observations are vital to understanding unmarked normative O'odham ways of walking. In the following attempt to construct an O'odham theory of walking that imbricates the ripening of "real people" and senses of place, it is productive to follow Thomas Tweed, who conceptualizes theories as "*sightings* from sites."³⁹⁰ Like Tweed, "my position...obscures some things as it illumines others."³⁹¹ This is necessarily the case since the ethnographer's perspective in walking to Magdalena was often and necessarily confined, walking in a single file line with eyes mostly focused on the feet or the backpack of the preceding person in order to avoid collision when the line slowed suddenly or abruptly came to a halt. This analysis also draws upon the close ethnographic observations of Ofelia Zepeda and Byrd Baylor in order to get at a particular O'odham way of walking that usually "goes without saying" as the normative unmarked mode of walking.

This study of walking to Magdalena meets Bourdieu's challenge to study "*religious labor* carried out by specialized producers and spokespeople invested with power, institutional or not, to respond to a particular category of needs belonging to

³⁸⁹ De Certeau 1984: 93.

³⁹⁰ Thomas A. Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2006), 13.

³⁹¹ Ibid., 18.

certain social groups with a definite type of practice or discourse.”³⁹² Findings demonstrate O’odham conceptualizations of “walkers” as specialized producers, producing religious labor – walking – for their kin and homeland.³⁹³ At the same time, findings suggest that the physicality of walking to Magdalena itself manufactures persons and place, further suggesting the interpenetration of O’odham anthropologies, or concepts of person, and cosmologies, or concepts of place.³⁹⁴ Hence, this chapter investigates the inculcation of embodied *himdag* – that is, ways of being a person – through *him*, or walking.

Vasudha Narayanan put forth the notion of “embodied cosmologies” to address embodied and emplaced practices such as walking to Magdalena.³⁹⁵ Moreover, Vásquez argues that Narayanan’s “embodied cosmologies” are not mere texts to be re-enacted or performed, as Clifford Geertz would have it in his textualization of practice.³⁹⁶ Instead, for Vásquez, “embodied cosmologies” are at the heart of “religion-in-the-making,” as practices and cosmologies are transformed and contested as they are embodied and emplaced.³⁹⁷

³⁹² Pierre Bourdieu, “Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field,” *Comparative Social Research* 13 (1991), 5.

³⁹³ The journey to Magdalena is consistent with Underhill’s conception of Tohono O’odham economics in that “[h]eavy labor, everywhere, was done by the young, under the direction of the old.” Underhill, *Social Organization of the Papago Indians*, 91.

³⁹⁴ See the explanation in chapter one for why the categories of place and cosmology are used more or less interchangeably.

³⁹⁵ Vasudha Narayanan, “Embodied Cosmologies: Sights of Piety, Sights of Power,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 71: 3 (2003), 495-520.

³⁹⁶ Clifford Geertz, “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight,” *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 412-453.

³⁹⁷ Vásquez, *More than Belief*, 252.

A Brief Literature Review of O'odham "Walking" (and "Dancing")

For Ofelia Zepeda, the physicality of certain iconic O'odham movement is embedded in the soundscape of her memory as an O'odham child. In her poem, "Landscape," Zepeda reminisces about an old O'odham woman, perhaps her grandmother, articulating the sounds, kinesthetics, and metaphysics of walking.³⁹⁸

The early morning sounds are so clear.
Familiar in my memory.

The sound of shuffling feet, a step, a shuffle.
She didn't lift her feet when she walked.
She shuffled to her own rhythm.

She didn't lift her feet.
She was in constant contact with the earth.
With each shuffle she pushed the earth along,
with each step she dragged time along.³⁹⁹

The sounds of shuffling feet that remain "in constant contact with the earth" are ingrained in her memory and gracefully articulated in her poem, which brings O'odham practices of walking to the level of an O'odham discourse on walking.⁴⁰⁰

Zepeda's autoethnographic memories, observations, and ontological musings may also be placed in relief against Byrd Baylor's observations in her novel about Tohono O'odham living in Tucson in the 1970s.⁴⁰¹ Baylor describes the characteristic movement of one of the fictional characters in her book, Maria Vasquez, as she walks from her

³⁹⁸ Ofelia Zepeda, *Where Clouds are Formed* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2008), 24-26.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁴⁰⁰ Like Zepeda, Fontana also describes O'odham walking as "shuffling," when he observed some O'odham walkers who "shuffle along, painfully determined to make it all the way to their destination." Fontana, "Pilgrimage to San Xavier," 47.

⁴⁰¹ Byrd Baylor, *Yes is Better than No* (New York: Avon Books, 1980 [1977]).

home, passing the shrine of St. Jude with a simple glance and “half a nod” on her way to the B-29 bar. According to Baylor, Maria’s manner of walking is distinctly O’odham, which Baylor juxtaposes to the characteristic manner in which she perceives (or imagines O’odham to perceive) how Mexican and Anglo women move.⁴⁰²

Maria walks down the dusty sidewalk slowly, slowly, evenly as Indian women walk. Though she is still young, her hips don’t swing; she doesn’t dance along the way Mexican girls do. Instead, she moves her feet on the city sidewalk as though she were moving barefoot across the desert. As though that journey might take all night, all week, a lifetime. The foot falls solidly to meet the earth, feels the pull of the earth. A heavy walk, but easy and animal-like. No man who watches women walk here mistakes the black-eyed, black-haired Indian girls for Mexicans. You can tell that walk from a block away.⁴⁰³

Although Baylor’s portrait of O’odham walking is romantic (“moving barefoot across the desert...animal-like”) and ahistorical (Maria’s journey to the B-29 bar could last “a lifetime,”) compared to Zepeda’s historical portrayal of O’odham walking, both depict a physical and metaphysical closeness between the earth and the soles of O’odham feet.⁴⁰⁴ Unlike Zepeda, who juxtaposes an old O’odham woman’s shuffling with her own step-wise maneuvering of uneven urban Tucson landscapes (“I consciously lift my foot with every step”), Baylor goes on to draw distinctions between O’odham, Mexican, and Anglo movements.

⁴⁰² See Ibid., 7-8 for Baylor’s juxtaposition of the movements of O’odham and Mexican women; see also Ibid., 95 for Baylor’s juxtaposition of the movements of O’odham and Anglo women.

⁴⁰³ Ibid., 7-8.

⁴⁰⁴ One possible explanation for this was given by O’odham woman to Zepeda, who relates that O’odham dancers should dance with “the dirt under their feet so that when the dancers got going, the dust would rise into the air and mix with everything else and result in rain, the ultimate goal.” Ofelia Zepeda, “Autobiography,” *Here First: Autobiographical Essays by Native American Writers*, Arnold Krupat and Brian Swann, eds., (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), 411.

O’odham Women	Mexican Women	Anglo Women
Slow [2X]	[Implicitly faster]	Almost runs
Even	Dancing	Bouncing
Heavy...easy, and animal-like	Swinging Hips	A little-girl motion no Papago woman uses

According to Baylor, O’odham valuations (kinesthetic ideologies) of these various movements (kinesthetics) are clear. The characteristic movements of Maria Vasquez, and presumably of other O’odham women, are markers of disciplined, sensuous maturity lacking in Mexican and Anglo women – that is, non-O’odham women – who are referred to as “girls,” who move in ways that “women” do not. Therefore, Baylor’s description of these movements reveals what she understands to be an O’odham prescription for movement, revealing O’odham kinesthetic ideologies.

	O’odham Women	Mexican Women	Anglo Women
Immodest/Immature	-	+	+
Modest/Mature	+	-	-

Moving from ethnographically informed poetry and novels, toward the ethnographer’s experiences and observations of O’odham on the walk to Magdalena, this analysis follows ethnomusicologist Janet Sturman, whose study of O’odham *Waila* traditions asserts the necessity of studying what she refers to as “kinesthetics,” or movement itself, and “kinesthetic ideologies,” or discourse on movement.⁴⁰⁵ In doing so, Sturman forcefully argues that in O’odham *Waila*,

patterns of movement (and conceptions behind them) link modern *waila* performance to much older ceremonial music and dance traditions as well as to long-standing cultural values. *Waila*, then, is not just O’odham music because O’odham play it; it embodies O’odham identity because of how

⁴⁰⁵ Sturman, “Movement Analysis as a Tool for Understanding Identity,” 56.

O’odham play and respond to it – or more precisely, how they move at *waila* events.⁴⁰⁶

Although Sturman is interested in identity while this study’s focus is on processes of maturation, or ripening, Sturman’s embodied conceptualization of O’odham identity dovetails with the conceptualization of O’odham “ripeness” as an embodied condition.

Sturman recorded Angelo Joaquin, Jr., the Tohono O’odham director of the annual *waila* festival in Tucson, stating that “O’odham don’t *bounce* when they dance....Keep your feet close to the ground, *glide*.”⁴⁰⁷ Prompted by Joaquin’s comments to attend to how musicians and dancers moved in *waila* performances, Sturman found that “Angelo [Joaquin] was right; O’odham barely move their bodies as they dance.”

Angelo Joaquin, Jr.:
+ **(minimalist)**
“glide”

- **(maximalist)**
“bounce”

Janet Sturman:
+ **(minimalist)**
“sliding”

“gliding”

- **(maximalist)**
“galloping”
“hopping”
“bouncing”
“head bobbing”

The differences between Sturman’s O’odham and non-O’odham “kinesthetic ideologies” might be glossed as minimalist and maximalist aesthetics of movement insofar as the minimalist aesthetic is equated with modesty and maturity while the maximalist aesthetic is equated with immodesty and immaturity. Sturman questions whether non-O’odham critics of O’odham *waila* who “have described *waila* versions of

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., 53.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.; emphasis added.

familiar melodies as ‘too steady,’ ‘too repetitive,’ or ‘deadly still,’” might be “more influenced by the actions of the performers than by the sound itself...[because] plenty of non-O’odham dancers respond with abandon and high-energy movement to *waila* music.”⁴⁰⁸

Joan Titus continues Sturman’s focus on “kinetic ideologies” in O’odham *Waila* performances. Following a particular song at a *Waila* event, Angelo Joaquin, Jr. translated an O’odham Master of Ceremonies’s public commentary in the O’odham language for Titus. Although the comments were made publicly by a public figure at the event, in effect, Angelo disclosed to Titus part of a “hidden transcript” revealing an O’odham kinesthetic ideology.⁴⁰⁹ Angelo translated the MC’s response as, “That was a very painful cumbia!” Cumbia is the most popular *waila* song and dance style among non-O’odham audiences, for whom such songs frequently elicit animated movements that some older O’odham consider to be not only less “traditional” than other *waila* appropriate dances such as the mazurka and the *cho:di* (or, schottische), but also potentially disrespectful. This led Titus to observe “that dance style, indeed movement in general, seemed to be an important part of the O’odham aesthetic.”⁴¹⁰ In contrast to these ostentatious and potentially disrespectful movements, Angelo explained to Titus that “still”-ness, or what folklorist James Griffith has called a “visual aesthetic...of

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid., 54.

⁴⁰⁹ James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990).

⁴¹⁰ Joan Titus, “*Waila* as Transnational Practice,” *Transnational Encounters: Music and Performance at the U.S.-Mexico Border*, Alejandro L. Madrid, trans., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 158.

smoothness, with little or no vertical movement” is highly regarded.⁴¹¹ Through Angelo’s explanation, Titus came to understand that “to be ‘still’ and smoothly glide across the dance floor was a sign of proficiency and grace, and a way of behaving modestly that is closely related to the *Himdag*, or Tohono O’odham way of life.”⁴¹² In contrast to the “bouncy” movements of younger dancers, Titus observed that some older O’odham dancers, whom she estimated had been dancing for many years, seemed to be “floating across the ground.”⁴¹³ Her attempts to emulate such stillness were met with much difficulty and even pain the following morning in her hips and lower back. Learning the hard way, Titus found that “stillness was an acquired skill that may appear simple, but was in fact a significant challenge.”⁴¹⁴

Because Titus uses the language of identity and performance, she concluded that “movement is an identity marker linked to Tohono O’odham philosophy about conducting oneself in daily life.”⁴¹⁵ However, if this claim were rearticulated in the language of “ripeness,” embodiment, and indexicality, then it is possible to say that movement is an index of “ripeness,” modesty, and maturity of O’odham-ness. Moreover, movement is not only the product of persons, but that movement - including journeys, such as walking to Magdalena - makes persons, or manufactures ripe O’odham maturity.

⁴¹¹ James S. Griffith, “Waila: The Social Dance Music of the Tohono O’odham,” *Musics of Multicultural America: A Study of Twelve Musical Communities*, Kip Lornell and Anne K. Rasmussen, eds., (London: Schirmer Books, 1997), 196.

⁴¹² Titus, “*Waila* as Transnational Practice,” 159.

⁴¹³ Ibid.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

Stated another way, particular types of movement produce (and are the products of, as indexes of) particular kinds of people.⁴¹⁶ For example, Titus's analysis of O'odham movements in *Waila* is particularly suggestive when she claims that "[a]ttracting attention to oneself [such as through ostentatious or immodest movement, for example]...is not just inappropriate, but is considered a form of bad luck, which could attract 'devils' and create 'devil sickness.'" Kozak and Lopez similarly comment on ostentatiousness and immodesty, in contending that "[t]he conspicuous display of wealth is the prerogative of devils."⁴¹⁷ Describing O'odham "devils," Bahr likewise asserts that "[t]hey dress as supercowboys, they ride the wildest horses, use the gaudiest saddles, [and] carry the shiniest ropes."⁴¹⁸ In addition to overt displays of wealth, ostentation more generally (even "showy" dancing or walking) is expected of devils, and therefore also of cowboys, who – as an occupational hazard – are at the greatest risk of contracting devil sickness.⁴¹⁹

Ruth Underhill identified what she considered to be three distinctively O'odham characteristics of human behavior. According to Underhill, O'odham "never raise their voices....[a]nd they are always laughing." In addition to these two traits, Underhill adds, "[t]heir movements are deliberate; our swift jerkiness can hardly comprehend the rhythm slowed down by desert heat...and these same slow movements have been going on in the

⁴¹⁶ Marie Gunst claimed that for O'odham, "every movement of the body expresses something." Marie Louise Gunst, "Ceremonials of the Papago and Pima Indians, with Special Emphasis on the Relation of the Dance to Their Religion," M.A. thesis, University of Arizona, 1930.

⁴¹⁷ Kozak and Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*, 92.

⁴¹⁸ Donald Bahr, Joseph Giff, and Manuel Havier, "Piman Songs on Hunting," *Ethnomusicology* 23:2 (1979), 263.

⁴¹⁹ Kozak and Lopez, *Devil Sickness and Devil Songs*, 111.

same desert since prehistoric time.”⁴²⁰ Although Underhill naturalizes and romanticizes the timelessness of O’odham “kinesthetic” and “kinesthetic ideologies,” as a natural human response to the heat of the desert, Sturman cautions against such ecological determinism in maintaining that “cultural values shape movement as much as physical practicalities.”⁴²¹ Hence, in agreement with Sturman, it is necessary to attend to what she refers to as “kinesthetic ideologies,” or notions of which movements are “good” (*s-ape*) and which are “bad” (*pi o ape*) by listening closely to what people say about movements in addition to attending to *how* people actually move through careful observation and participatory engagement. (For example, recall the anecdote in the introduction in which the ethnographer acquires an O’odham nickname.)

Walking to Magdalena: O’odham Categories of Movement in O’odham Narratives

him, hih, hihim, hihm; hi *V* move along; progress; walk; (of anything that progresses, as time, opportunity, experience) to pass; *Vt* conduct (as one’s affairs); obey; observe; follow (as laws, customs, etc)

[himdag] himthag; hi *N* a way of life; a culture; a custom or pactice; traditions; *Vs* be able to walk; *s-Vs* be a good walker.⁴²²

[T]he Saxton et al. entry...show[s] that *him* can refer to spatial movement, temporal and other movement, and the notion of conduct, which may have an intentional component.⁴²³

⁴²⁰ Ruth Murray Underhill, *Singing for Power: The Song Magic of the Papago Indians of Southern Arizona* (Tucson and London: The University of Arizona Press, 1993 [1938]), 2.

⁴²¹ Sturman, “Movement Analysis as a Tool for Understanding Identity,” 59.

⁴²² Dean Saxton, Lucille Saxton, and Susie Enos, *Tohono O’odham/Pima to English, English to Tohono O’odham/Pima Dictionary*, R. L. Cherry, ed., (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998 [1983]), 22.

⁴²³ Colleen M. Fitzgerald, “Language Change and Motion Verbs in Tohono O’odham,” (2004), 3, point 27.

As mentioned, most O’odham refer to the trek to Magdalena as either “the walk” in English, or *him* or *himdag* in O’odham.⁴²⁴ Movement across the desert ideally – though not necessarily in practice – involves a particularly disciplined and stylized type of movement that involves a sensuous exchange with nature. This movement bears a heavy semantic load within O’odham language since the verb *him* or “to walk,” which can refer to spatial and temporal movement as well as reflect O’odham conceptions of the maturity and agency of persons, is the root of *himdag* which may be translated either as a noun, “a way of life, a culture, a custom, or practice, or traditions,” or as a stative verb, as “to be a good walker.”

This research suggests that much can be gained by moving away from abstractions of *himdag* as “tradition” or “culture” in order to focus on what it means “to be a good walker.” In this regard, this analysis follows Tod Swanson, who reunites ethics and aesthetics – notoriously divided by Immanuel Kant – in order to succinctly argue that “the moral character is a person with style.”⁴²⁵ For the Tohono O’odham, whatever it means “to be a good walker” is intimately related to the disciplined, sensuous maturity of Tohono O’odham elders, with a life full of experience and a body full of knowledge and skill. Narayanan’s notion of “embodied cosmologies” in her discussion of diasporic Indian performances from the *Ramayana* or the *Mahabharata*, in which “the movements

⁴²⁴ For example, see Siquieros, “The Magdalena Pilgrimage,” 3; and Lewis and Bahr, “Whither T-himdag,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 8:1 (1992), 70-90.

⁴²⁵ Tod D. Swanson, “Weathered Character: Envy and Response to the Seasons in Native American Traditions,” *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 20:2 (1992), 306; see also Tod Dillon Swanson, “Singing to Estranged Lovers: Runa Relations to Plants in the Ecuadorian Amazon,” *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 3:1 (2009), 36-65; for the division of ethics and aesthetics, see Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Marcus Weigelt and Max Muller, trans., (New York: Penguin Classics, 2008 [1781]; Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, James Creed Meredith, trans., (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988 [1790]).

of the actors are as important as the lines they utter,” is also useful here.⁴²⁶ O’odham ways of walking constitute such an embodied cosmology, or as Vásquez puts it, “a particular way of carrying oneself, an embodied aesthetic or poetics of life.”⁴²⁷

In O’odham narrative discourse, *him*, or “walking” is juxtaposed to *oimed*, or “wandering,” which is characteristic of undisciplined, immature characters who lack disciplined intentionality, are easily distracted, lazy, sexually loose and neglect their kinship obligations in seeking their own self-interests and pleasures.⁴²⁸ This point has already been illustrated in the story of how the Homeless Women became the Pleiades. These women have “the wandering heart.”⁴²⁹ In this ethical and aesthetic – rather than its ethnic – sense of the word, being a “person” or *O’odham* is differentially distributed among those who call themselves “O’odham,” since “being a good walker” is an acquired art or skill. *In short, it is not people who make journeys: rather, journeys make people.* The so-called “pilgrimage” to Magdalena should be understood within this context in which – as J.S. La Fontaine (1985: 139) put it – “not all individuals are persons” and

⁴²⁶ Narayanan, “Embodied Cosmologies.”

⁴²⁷ Vásquez 2011: 242.

⁴²⁸ Regina Harrison, “The Metaphysics of Sex: Quichua Songs from the Tropical Forest,” *Signs, Songs, and Memory in the Andes: Translating Quechua Language and Culture* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), 144-171; Swanson, “Singing to Estranged Lovers”; and Elsje Maria Lagrou, “Homesickness and the Cashinahua Self: A Reflection on the Embodied Condition of Relatedness,” *The Anthropology of Love and Anger: The Aesthetics of Conviviality in Native Amazonia*, Joanna Overing and Alan Passes, eds., (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 152-169; similarly, Don Bahr juxtaposes *ki*:, that is “living” or “dwelling” and *oimed*, or “wandering,” “fooling around,” in Donald M. Bahr, *Santa Rosa, Arizona*, unpublished manuscript in possession of the author (1964): 191; Bahr also discusses “distracted travel” in Donald M. Bahr, “Four Papago Rattlesnake Songs,” *Speaking, Singing and Teaching: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Language Variation – Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Southwestern Areal Language and Linguistics Workshop*, Florence Barkin and Elizabeth Brandt, eds., (Tempe: Arizona State University Anthropological Research Papers No. 20, 1980), 122; see also David Kozak and David Lopez, “Echoes of Mythical Creation: Snakes, Sex, Voice,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 10:1 (1994), 52-58.

⁴²⁹ Underhill, *Social Organization of the Papago Indians*, 184.

“personhood is the fulfillment of a socially significant career.” Indeed, many O’odham narratives about journeys to Magdalena that were collected themselves suggest this interpretation insofar as these stories are preoccupied with the consequences of one’s thoughts and actions.⁴³⁰

For example, Simon Lopez related two stories: one of a “good walker” and the other about falling short of this ideal. The first story Simon shared is about his daughter, Rozy, who walked to Magdalena in order to ask Saint Francis to spare the life of her nephew, Robert, who was on life support and expected to die after suffering severe brain damage in an automobile accident that had claimed the life of his two parents. Simon told the first story when asked what walkers should be thinking about when they are walking to Magdalena.

SS: You had said earlier that if you are thinking the right thoughts, that it [the journey to Magdalena] is supposed to be easier. What are those good thoughts that you’re supposed to be thinking when you are going down there?

SL: Even these people, like my kids, when we go on the walk, we always do the prayers, rosary, for them. The next day...they leave. And I always try to tell them, you know, “When we go down there, there’s a lot of things *that you’re going there for*. You’re not just going there for the walk, but there’s a lot of times that you might have something in your family that’s not working right, or you jobs, or things like that that you ask for and that’s the only thing that you have to think about when you go: why you are going to Saint Francis. And all this that you can think, you know, the kind of help that you need.”⁴³¹

⁴³⁰ In this regard, the findings of this study are consistent with what an unnamed Tohono O’odham woman San Xavier told George Williamson in 1950. George H. Williamson, “Why the Pilgrims Come,” *Kiva* 16:1/2 (1950), 6.

⁴³¹ sl_1.2

As Simon “preaches” to his own family, walkers should have a singular purpose in mind when they are walking, and “that’s the only thing that you have to think about when you go.” Simon went on, adding, “Or there’s a sick[ness] in the family.”

SL: Like my daughter, my oldest daughter [Rozy], when Robert got injured with his head injury. And the Doctors in Phoenix said that, “He can’t live. He can’t live. Because too much blood got into his *brains*, and he can’t live, so might as well take the machine off of him and just wait.”⁴³²

Rather than passively accepting a medical diagnosis of certain impending death, Simon’s daughter Rozy took the initiative to do everything that was within her power to do in order to save Robert.

SL: So right away, my daughter thought about her *faith*, so she told those doctors that we’re gonna ask for the help from our faith. “If you can just *leave those machines* for at least a week, and we’ll see what he can do. Maybe he’ll come back.” So they said, “Okay.” So they *did*.⁴³³

Buying time from the medical establishment to seek another way of healing for Robert, Simon stated:

SL: And *right away*, I thought of that medicine woman that was here that do[es] a lot of curing and things like that. So I told her. So right away she got ready and she went to Phoenix. And she told us, “He’s not going to die, he’s not going to die, *he’s gonna live, he’s gonna live*. You guys, just pray, and do what you can, and *he’s gonna live*, he’ll be okay.” So that’s what that medicine woman said.⁴³⁴

So Simon and his family did just that, they prayed and sang together in the Phoenix hospital room while Rozy made her way to Magdalena.

⁴³² sl_1.2

⁴³³ sl_1.2

⁴³⁴ sl_1.2

SL: She took her patron saint over there and we took the others [saints, that is] when we prayed over there in his room and the chapel for three days. And sure enough, he opened his eyes.⁴³⁵

Even as Robert began his slow recovery, western bio-medicine continually offered a grim diagnosis.

SL: And the doctors said, “he’s not going to see, he’s probably not going to see. He’ll be blind, or maybe he’s not going to talk, or walk.” *But he did. He’s talking* right now, and *walking*, you can hear him *singing* as loud as he can and walking. And he can see better. Well, he has a little problem with his sight, but they said it’s from that head injury that he had. And sure enough he did!⁴³⁶

Though his doctors said he would be blind, he regained his sight. Though they said he would be mute, he regained his speech. Though they said that he would never walk again, today, Robert walks to Magdalena. Not only can Robert talk and walk, but he can dance and sing, including the Lopez family’s songs for journeying to Magdalena (chapter two), and many other traditional O’odham social songs, thanks to Rozy’s walk to Magdalena as a labor of love. Simon continued, “So at *that time*, it was time for the walkers to go, so my daughter said, that she’s going to *walk*.” Simon’s voice trembled on the word “walk,” saying, “Walk to Magdalena for Robert and ask Saint Francis that he’s gonna get help from him, for Robert.”

Returning to the original question about thinking “good thoughts,” Simon resumed his narrative, preaching to his daughter Rozy:

SL: So I said, “Okay, if that’s what’s on your mind, then you can do that. It’s the only thing that you can do, think about Robert.” *And so she did*. And when she came back, she really felt good. “I’m really, really, really good. I think that something’s telling me to go.”...And *that’s* what most

⁴³⁵ sl_1.2

⁴³⁶ sl_1.2

people *do* if they walk or go to Magdalena. And that's what they think [about], you know, is their family, their health, or whatever that they go down there to pray to Saint Francis to get all of these back.⁴³⁷

When Simon was asked explicitly what it might mean to translate *himdag* as “to be a good walker,” and how *himdag* might be used to describe or refer to an actual person, he replied as follows, illustrating not only that his daughter Rozy is a “good walker,” but also that such disciplined, modest, mature, or “ripe” persons are acted upon by an agentive *himdag*. This is what moved Rozy to action, telling her to go.

SL: Yeah...I guess it's just the same way like they say in the *himdag*. It's something, like I've already mentioned: *Why, why* do you do the walk? And *why* – like for instance, like my daughter, my daughter – *why* she did that walk for Robert. And that's a good walker. If somebody *feels* or thinks of something like that, we consider *himdag*. “It's *himdag*, that's making him [sic] do that.” That would be, you know, [how] I'd describe him [sic] like that.⁴³⁸

Although Simon's first story stresses the positive consequences of positive thoughts and actions for mature O'odham as “real people,” the second story that Simon shared follows different characters with different motives and therefore a different character arc as the plot unfolds. In short, the story is about a couple who tries to go to Magdalena, but fails to do so successfully because of their failure to overcome their own immature, undisciplined lifestyle. Significantly, Simon claimed no one in his family had

⁴³⁷ sl_1.2

⁴³⁸ sl_1.2; Simon's use of the English third person singular pronoun “him” to refer back to her daughter is not an “error.” As William Leap has noted, “Indian English varieties do not always maintain the standard English gender distinctions indicated by the third person singular personal pronouns (*he, she, it*). As a result, gender and number features associated with a speaker's choice of subject or object pronoun do not always correspond with the gender and number features of its antecedent.” Leap further suggests that this may be a substrate lexical influence from the American Indian language. William L. Leap, *American Indian English* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1993), 58-60; for other scholars have found this feature in O'odham English as well, see Manuel and Neff, *Desert Indian Woman*, xvi; and Jack O. Waddell, “Mesquite and Mountains with Money and Messiah: A Papago Indian Case of Cultural Revitalization,” *Journal of the Steward Anthropological Society* 2:1 (1970), 83 n. 4.

ever experienced any problems such as these, which is why the following story was about non-relatives.

SL: And this guy and his wife, he never goes to Magdalena. So, they wanted to *go to Magdalena*. And so they got ready. They left, and they went around Sonoita, and along down that way. There's a *long* stretch of the road, you know, a *long* stretch of the road, and *way* past, you can see that *mountain*! And *there's* a place there, which is kind of like uh...a rest area over there, somewhere there. So they went. *And so I don't know*, I guess...his *cheg'to* [or, "thinking"] is way far off. And when they got there, they stopped, and they were sittin' there, looking at the road. "Oh, it's too *far*." 'Cuz he can see the road.⁴³⁹

Since Simon knew his interlocutor (the ethnographer) had never gone to Magdalena through Sonoita, and therefore that his conversation partner was unfamiliar with the area that he refers to in this story, he compared this dauntingly long stretch of road that seems to go on forever to the so-called "Valley of Death" that one encounters during the drive from Phoenix to Simon's home in Santa Rosa. The road that runs through this particular valley is comparably densely populated with crosses alongside the road, marking the places of sudden, violent vehicular death.

SL: It's just like when you're coming out from Casa Grande....That area. And then you see where those crosses are, where the road goes. And you can see the road...*way* over there.⁴⁴⁰

Simon stressed that "this one is *further*" than the familiar "Valley of Death." He goes on:

SL: So they sat there. They were *lookin'* at the road...stretched, and *no cars*! So *anyway*, that's what happened to *this guy*. When they get there, he was sitting there, wondering, "*gosh*, we're gonna go..." and look *way*. So as he *thinks* of things like that, the road gets stretchier and stretchier. And he'll think, "Oh, it's too far. It's too far out. I think we can't." *So they just turn around right there*. Turn around and came back *home*, and they never made it to Magdalena.⁴⁴¹

⁴³⁹ sl_2.2

⁴⁴⁰ sl_2.2

As previously mentioned, Simon insisted that no one in his family has ever experienced any problems such as these. And at the end of this story, Simon shifted from a narrative mode to a speech genre that Don Bahr calls “preaching,” in order to drive home the pedagogical value of the story for his own family.⁴⁴²

SL: That’s *why*, we tell you, “*Don’t* think back. And think of where you’re going, and the trip’s going to be shorter. The road’s going to be shorter.” Instead of what you’re doing is you’re saying, “No, it’s too far. I don’t think we can make it. We might as well head on back.” And *that’s* what made you turn around and come *back!* And *that’s what happens*, you know, a lot of times, with a lot of people. And *that’s why* I tell my kids, “*Never think back; always think ahead of where you’re going.* And nothing will, you know, be hard for you.”⁴⁴³

Here, the connections between place and ripeness become more explicit: Those who know the land – and therefore *how* to move across the land – are more fully developed persons than those who do not know the land, and are therefore less capable of achieving a socially significant career. If walking to Magdalena is more difficult than driving, it is also more prestigious. The first story describes a disciplined character who is familiar with the areas she will travel through, successfully undertaking a journey for a clearly defined and socially privileged purpose. The second story concerns a couple of undisciplined characters who are unfamiliar with the areas, unsuccessfully undertaking a journey for a vaguely defined and perhaps even for socially and ethically dubious purposes. In other words, the juxtaposition of these two stories is essentially a

⁴⁴¹ sl_2.2

⁴⁴² Donald M. Bahr, *Pima and Papago Ritual Oratory: A Study of Three Texts* (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press, 1975), 5.

⁴⁴³ sl_2.2; the importance of never looking back during a journey is also discussed in Stewart, “Southern Papago Salt Pilgrimages,” 90.

juxtaposition of *him*, or “walking,” and “wandering” (*oimed*), which as previously stated is characteristic of unruly, immature characters lacking disciplined intentionality, who are easily distracted, lazy, sexually loose, and neglect their kinship obligations in pursuing their own self-interests.

Many of these stories about journeys to Magdalena are passed down through generations. As Felix Antone, the recently deceased leader of the walk to Magdalena, began to fall ill, Simon’s son and Rozy’s brother, Louis Lopez, embraced an increased leadership role in planning and executing the walk. Louis explained how his experience of walking to Magdalena under Felix’s tutelage had the effect of epistemologically actualizing his father’s traditional oral knowledge of the areas around his family’s traditional routes to Magdalena that he had grown up hearing about, but never experienced himself firsthand. Louis described how he would approach Felix to learn from him in the evenings and during times of rest.

LAL: If we had like [an] opportunity where we weren’t so tired...I’d go sit with him. He’d tell me about the area and the surrounding areas and I’m sure that, you know, you’ve probably gotten stories from my Dad [Simon Lopez], where they used to go there [to Magdalena] on *horseback* and on the *wagons* and the trails that they used to go down and up that way on the horse and wagon trails. And that’s what he would tell us, that’s what Felix would say. He would almost just kind of reiterate what my [Dad said]. But *not* [exactly], it was always just like hearsay.⁴⁴⁴

Transformed in practice through walking to Magdalena with Felix, what had previously been little more than hearsay to Louis finally came to life.

LAL: Like my Dad would tell me, “This is where we did...and this is what we did...and you’ll come to this mountain.” And we’d come to them, [and Felix would] tell me what those mountains were. But I never really saw them growing up. I mean, I heard those stories. And he [Simon]

⁴⁴⁴ lal_1.1

would tell me those things, but I never [actually saw them] until I started walking. And then Felix would really kind of point out those trails. It was kind of like, “*Oh, this is what my Dad was talking about!*”⁴⁴⁵

Through the embodied experiences of walking to Magdalena and learning about various places along the way, Louis’s traditional oral knowledge took on flesh as he himself was emplaced within the land of his ancestors that he had heard of, but had never himself experienced. For Louis, walking to Magdalena mutually and incrementally produces “real people” as well as place, as the embodied practice of walking conjoined the physicality of movement through a geographical space with his local, familial knowledge of particular places.

By attending to O’odham categories of movement as expressed in narrative discourse and as observed in practice, I meet James Clifford’s challenge “to rethink cultures as sites of dwelling *and* travel, to take travel knowledges seriously,” while insisting at the same time that “we need to know about places traveled through.”⁴⁴⁶ Movement itself, in both discourse and practice, inscribes O’odham conceptions of place and what it means to be a “real person,” as well as the connections between them. Walking to Magdalena through their traditional territory to which they hold no legal title recognized by Mexico – in a procession – constitutes what de Certeau calls a “spatial practice,” a pedestrian act of possession.⁴⁴⁷ O’odham theories of “ripeness” and place-making lie at the intersection between ritual studies and legal studies. O’odham

⁴⁴⁵ lal_1.1

⁴⁴⁶ James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1997), 31, 36.

⁴⁴⁷ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Steven Rendall, trans., (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1984 [1980]): 91-130.

conceptions of anthropology and cosmology are also mutually imbricated. Although journeys clearly make people – rather than the other way around – this analysis shows that journeys also make places. Movement then simultaneously socializes space, manufacturing place, and makes mature persons, or “real people.” This resonates with both de Certeau’s conception of walking as constitutive of social space and Edith Turner’s understanding of pilgrimage as “a kinetic ritual,” which Sallnow builds upon in his characterization of pilgrimage as “a kinesthetic mapping of space.”⁴⁴⁸

Although Clifford notes that the category of “travel” carries with it various gender, class, and cultural biases, this of course does not prevent O’odham themselves from using this category for their own movement between their homes and Magdalena. In addition, humans are not the only ones who “travel,” since for example saints and staffs who are treated with respect and interacted with as persons (or O’odham) also “travel,” usually (though certainly not always) “with,” human O’odham.

Other categories of movement include “visiting” and “staying.”⁴⁴⁹ For example, Jonas Robles (a former Chairman for the Gu Achi District, an Elder Member of the Board of Trustees for Tohono O’odham Community College, a Substance Abuse Counselor with Tohono O’odham Behavioral Health, and the oldest O’odham in the group of walkers) explained that he goes to Magdalena to “visit” and “stay” with Saint Francis,

⁴⁴⁸ Victor Turner and Edith L.B. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978): xiii; Sallnow, *Pilgrims of the Andes*, 184.

⁴⁴⁹ Kirstin Erickson also found these categories of movement among her Yoeme, or Yaqui, collaborators. Kirstin C. Erickson, *Yaqui Homeland and Homeplace: The Everyday Production of Ethnic Identity* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2008), 52-53; James Griffith also reported that Mayo dancers in Magdalena stated their primary reason for attending the Magdalena fiesta in 1965 was to “visit with the Saint.” James S. Griffith, “Magdalena Revisited: The Growth of a Fiesta,” *The Kiva* 33:2 (1967), 84.

whom Jonas more affectionately calls *Ke:li*, meaning “The Old Man,” or *Ma:kai*, meaning “Medicine Man,” or “Healer.”⁴⁵⁰

JR: One of the medicine persons that told us [Jonas’s group of traditional dancers] to [go to Magdalena], ‘cuz we were doing a lot of traveling and things like that, performances at different places. What he said was for the group to “go four years up to Mali:na.” And that’s my first time that I saw Mali:na! [Laughing.] And I was way...*in my adult years*, you know. And I finally got to see where Mali:na was! But I had heard a lot of stories about the Saint [Francis], that they went to visit, ask for his help, and they would, *it worked*, you know. And they would get that *help*. So, we went there four years, and that’s when I also started going on *my own*.⁴⁵¹

Another O’odham man, Joe Joaquin, a Cultural Preservation Officer for the Tohono O’odham Nation, explained that the so-called “pilgrimage” to Magdalena is about “returning” to “visit” with Saint Francis. In Joe Joaquin’s view, O’odham journeys to Magdalena consistently stressed the O’odham ownership of Saint Francis and Magdalena. In the introductory chapter, Joe told a story about how the O’odham tried to bring Saint Francis to their land, but were unable to bring him across the border, “so they put him in a cave up there somewhere” until somebody found him there later and brought it back down to Magdalena. But, Joe emphasized, “it was really the O’odham’s, *O’odham’s Saint*,” Saint Francis “*belonged* to the O’odham.”⁴⁵²

Although many O’odham anticipate and enjoy journeys to Magdalena, taking pride in “returning” to their homeland, other O’odham are more critical of contemporary journeys to Magdalena. For example, Camillus Lopez (an accomplished story teller and language and culture teacher at Tohono O’odham Community College), who goes to

⁴⁵⁰ jr_1.1

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

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Magdalena but never plans to do so on foot, stated that this group going by foot was more of “a health thing” for “exercise” than it is something “spiritual,” like a pilgrimage. In defense of this position, Camillus pointed out that none of the so-called “walkers” *walk back* to wherever they came from. “You know... walking to *Mali:na*, they say, “Did you walk back? [Laughing] ‘Cuz it’s one thing to walk that way, but another thing to walk back!”⁴⁵³ Without taking a breath, Camillus switched from a biting cultural critique to historical memories of a time before O’odham could easily load into trucks in Magdalena and arrive back home only a few hours later.

CL: I mean, when we stay over there, we have to get rested. I mean, really, at least two weeks or three weeks to really get the energy to come back. And then my Mother tells these stories. My Mom’s from Big Field, and so she would tell the story about how they’re coming from Magdalena. And they’re in the back of the wagon, and they would sometimes be sleeping. We’d come up and they’d get these bells, and they would ring the bells.⁴⁵⁴

Like the chirping of Swallows and the sound of Swallow songs (in chapter two), the sound of bells chiming signals a return home. Even in the middle of the night, these sounds reunited families who hadn’t seen one another for a month or maybe more.

CL: Because that *cewidag*, “to return back,” is a great thing, because you went over there and you came back safely. And you brought back the power from the Saint. So they say the *cewidag*. “To come back.” And that’s a strong thing. And they would have celebrations for that.⁴⁵⁵

Then again, without a breath, Simon switched back from historical memory to cultural criticism, using the stories he grew up hearing as a corrective to those contemporary

⁴⁵³ cl.ag_1.1

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walkers, whom Camillus considers to be insufficiently “spiritual” in their motivations.

Speaking of the celebrations of return, Camillus continued:

CL: They do that now, people that go. But I think that’s probably what’s missing is that element, because there is some accounts of people who have died over there, or died on the way going that way, or coming back. There’s accounts of people who have gotten sick and just didn’t come back because they were too sick. And still now, people die over there for different reasons. So that whole element of, you know, going and coming back safely is what they celebrated. You know, when you come back you have to throw the dance on because you’re calling people together so that they can partake and then also get your gift of healing, or whatever you got from Magdalena. Now, so that’s the whole idea of the thing, okay.⁴⁵⁶

As the above narratives illustrate, the value and meaning of these categories of movement is contested. In focusing on this contestation, this interpretation follows John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow’s model of pilgrimage as “a *realm of competing discourses*.”⁴⁵⁷ The dominant ideology, then, seems to be that those who know the land – and therefore know *how* to move across the land – are more fully developed, mature, ripe persons than those who do not know the land, and are therefore less capable of achieving a socially significant career. In other words, “good walkers” are more likely to bring various “blessings” from Saint Francis and Magdalena back to O’odham villages, while those who fall short of this ideal are more likely to be the recipients of these “blessings.” Camillus Lopez challenges the pretensions and potential inequalities that may result from this system; essentially, if journeys make mature persons – not to mention if journeys lay

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⁴⁵⁷ John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow, “Introduction,” *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*, John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow, eds., (London and New York: Routledge, 1991): 5.

claim to places – then why stop half way by only walking *to* Magdalena and not walking back *from* Magdalena?

Walking, then, is not only part of everyday life; it is also a significant component of O’odham *himdag*, or ways of life. Nonetheless, as obesity and diabetes continue to afflict O’odham, in what Carolyn Smith-Morris has dubbed a “landscape of (in)activity,” today walking has arguably become less a part of everyday O’odham life than it was in the past.⁴⁵⁸ Particularly in this contemporary “landscape of (in)activity,” walking to Magdalena perhaps seems out of place, an ostentatious mass-movement that for some non-walkers might seem to be a shameless display of pride – a character flaw, or index of immaturity. In this sense, it is no wonder that critics might consider the group of walkers to be making the journey to Magdalena for “exercise.”⁴⁵⁹

Bahr noted that prideful “showing off” or “display,” which he defines as “mak[ing] a scarce possession visible,” renders O’odham vulnerable to the charge of “bad taste.”⁴⁶⁰ Adapting Swanson’s “the moral character is a person with style,” the person with no style or “bad taste” is a person of dubious moral character.⁴⁶¹ For Bahr, Christianity provides O’odham a way to show off (with style?) when he noted that Christian “churches provide more people with ways to show off than any other kind of organization that people can belong to,” and moreover that “[s]howing off through one’s church is less easily criticized than other modes of assertion,” whether through “singing,

⁴⁵⁸ Carolyn Smith-Morris, *Diabetes among the Pima: Stories of Survival* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2006), 15.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁰ Bahr 1964: 41-42.

⁴⁶¹ Swanson, “Weathered Character,” 306.

honoring saints...leading prayers, acquiring holy images, [or] making a 200-mile pilgrimage to [Magdalena] Mexico.”⁴⁶² So-called “walkers,” then, are vulnerable to this charge of ostentatious movement, particularly absent sufficient purpose and maturity. Nonetheless, if pride is a sin, many O’odham are proud to be able to use Christianity and its various powerful persons – whether God, Jesus, Mary, various Saints, or others – in service to this most virtuous vice (see chapter five for more on O’odham pride).

Summary

Through exploring the physicality of movement in general and walking in particular – while also attending to O’odham discourses on these movements – this chapter arrives at a general, albeit a contested and historically contingent, sketch of an O’odham ideology of walking (and dancing, and perhaps movement in general) as political discourse, or what Nancy Louise Frey has called “the polemics of movement” in her study of pilgrims on the road to Santiago de Campostella.⁴⁶³

A focus on “walking” and what it means “to be a good walker” can be useful for scholars interested in articulating O’odham theories of movement that go beyond abstract reifications of “pilgrimage.” Walking simultaneously produces persons and places, or socially significant spaces, which in turn produces well practiced, disciplined, “ripe” persons. When the journey to Magdalena is viewed as an embodied cosmology, or a cosmological embodiment, walking can be seen as an epistemologically, ontologically,

⁴⁶² Bahr 1964: 46.

⁴⁶³ Nancy Louise Frey, *Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1998), 17.

and axiologically actualizing embodied practice. This chapter demonstrates how a particular O’odham way of walking is related to the incremental production of *siakam*, an O’odham notion of maturity pertaining to “ripening” or “ripeness,” and that *siakam*, as pinnacles of O’odhamness, are inextricably linked to what it means “to be a good walker” (*himdag*). In this sense, *himdag*, as agentive tradition or culture that acts on O’odham bodies, produces *himdag* in the sense of being a good walker, which in turn produces *himdag*, or tradition. If *O’odham* refers to “people,” then *siakam* means something like “real people,” or those ripened, matured, modest individuals who subtly and stylishly exude O’odhamness. In short, as Tim Ingold and Jo Le Vergunst argue, “walking is a profoundly social activity.”⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁶⁴ Tim Ingold and Jo Lee Vergunst, “Introduction,” *Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice on Foot*, Tim Ingold and Jo Lee Vergunst, eds., (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 1.

CHAPTER 5

WRITING O'ODHAM HISTORY

AND THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE AMERICAS

So far, this dissertation has covered much ground in exploring how O'odham make places and people. The introductory chapter and chapter one outlined the data, methods, and theories employed in this study, while emphasizing the mutual imbrication of person and place and how some O'odham have made Christianity their own by embedding Christianity within their ancestral landscapes. Chapter two demonstrated how O'odham songs associated with the journey to Magdalena evoke both a sense of movement to Magdalena and back as well as senses of the past embedded in these places. Chapter three showed that staffs used by O'odham walkers on their way to Magdalena evoke memories of previous movements, linking walkers and their sticks, sticks and stories, people and places, and the past and the present. Staffs, then, make Magdalena palpably present in the everyday lives of many O'odham who cannot help but be transported by their sticks to stories and memories made along the road to Magdalena. Chapter four illustrated how O'odham simultaneously produce persons and places by examining O'odham kinesthetics and kinesthetic ideologies as well as juxtapositions of “walking” and “wandering” in O'odham narrative discourse. The present chapter, chapter five, returns to the theme of O'odham embedding, or emplacing, Christianity into their ancestral and conceptual landscapes first introduced in chapter one. This chapter explores divergent O'odham senses of the past in the present, what one consultant called an O'odham need “to be grounded,” and O'odham methods for connecting O'odham people

to O'odham places, which include but are not exclusively limited to walking to Magdalena.

Introduction

I don't know. Sometimes it's unbelievable. Well, I guess it's the same thing, like between the I'ittoi and the God. Like I say, you know, who are you gonna believe: God or I'ittoi? And yet it's probably just one. Maybe that's the same thing, that the O'odham say, "Our Creator." It's the same thing. "So you believe in that?" "Yeah, we believe in that." And we can't say, "No, I don't believe in God; I believe in I'ittoi." We can't say that because we know that God is God and maybe it's the same thing. I'ittoi is probably the God. I mean, you know, I don't know how to put it. But that's one thing that we can never forget, is believing in God, what we learn from our religions, which is probably the same.

- Simon Lopez⁴⁶⁵

In February of 2011, during a meeting discussing the possibility of pursuing this project at the Tohono O'odham Nation Cultural Center and Museum, Felix Antone stated that in order to know anything about the walk to Magdalena, one must first understand that the walk is hardly a recent development. Instead, he said, "this walk was here in the time of I'ittoi." I'ittoi is the ancient figure who is said to have successfully formed O'odham bodies and given O'odham their *himdag*, or way of life, which, today, also encompasses Christian practices. In this view, what Tohono O'odham have made of Christianity was made for them by I'ittoi. To state it differently – and to highlight agency – Tohono O'odham did not make Christianity their own within the last 150 years as scholars have assumed; I'ittoi made Christianity for them at the time of the establishment of O'odham homelands. Felix's assertion that "this walk was here in the time of I'ittoi" is

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a stance deliberately in opposition to Euro-centric assumptions of the history of Christianity in the Americas.⁴⁶⁶ In Donald Bahr's words, Felix's assertion "parodies" those western historicities, or senses of history, that assume Christianity was brought to the Americas by the Spanish.⁴⁶⁷ For Felix, Christianity is not a European import brought to O'odham lands by Father Kino and others within the last 400 years; rather, Christianity was embedded into the land (the *jewed ka:cim*, or "staying earth") at the founding of the O'odham cosmos.

To be sure, Felix's comments were more suggestive than definitive, and it may never be entirely certain what he meant. Research plans included following up on this statement to elicit elaboration with numerous questions, the following being only a sampling: When was the walk to Magdalena established in relation to other significant events in Tohono O'odham oral history? Was the walk here before the coming of Europeans? If the walk was established "in the time of I'itoi," and the walk is said to honor Saint Francis, what is the nature of the relationship between I'itoi and Saint Francis?

The answers to these questions would have had direct implications for the broader question that unites this study: What have Tohono O'odham made of Christianity?

Moreover, the plan was to further elaborate upon these preliminary findings by

⁴⁶⁶ Donald Bahr, *How Mockingbirds Are: O'odham Ritual Orations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2011), 5, 154, n. 8; Some O'odham stories of the origin of Christianity might also be in conversation with Yoeme, or Yaqui, Talking Tree stories. For example, see twelve versions of the Talking Tree story and an accompanying analysis in David Delgado Shorter, "Listening to the Tree and Hearing History," *We Will Dance Our Truth: Yaqui History in Yoeme Performances* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 111-146.

⁴⁶⁷ Many western traditions have also assumed that some form of Christianity was in the Americas prior to the arrival of Europeans in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

discussing these issues in depth, not only with Felix, but also with other Tohono O'odham elders, community leaders, ordinary walkers, and non-walkers alike, to further aid in answering this broader question.

However, research with knowledgeable elders is inherently problematic; when Felix Antone passed away suddenly on January 31, 2012, his passing resulted in reprioritization, not only for this study but also for the community. Several impromptu events were held in his honor, including a walk to his burial place that became another opportunity for participant-observation. During these trips, conversations with other elders addressed what it might mean if “this walk was here in the time of I’itoi.” These elders and other consultants who had considered Felix to be their teacher related a range of senses of the past, or historicities, that bore direct relevance to a recent cleavage in Felix’s group of walkers. For a brief time in the decade before this study began, the number of walkers had reached 400, but this large group allegedly split over a dispute involving the participation of non-O’odham in the walk. By 2009, this dispute was more or less resolved. However, the group of walkers who followed Felix was reduced to about half of what they had been before. In short, it seems that both groups – Felix’s and the primary splinter group – invoked alternate senses of the past that variously justified the inclusion or exclusion of non-O’odham – and more specifically, non-Indians – in the walk to Magdalena. Rather than adjudicating the veracity of these senses of history, Bernard Fontana maintains “[t]o the anthropologist concerned with folk histories, the

truth or untruth of oral traditions is irrelevant. What is relevant is that someone else defines truth differently and sees history in a different way.”⁴⁶⁸

Stifling Controversy

Orthodoxy, straight, or rather *straightened*, opinion, which aims, without ever entirely succeeding, at restoring the primal state of innocence of doxa, exists only in the objective relationship which opposes it to heterodoxy, that is, by reference to the choice - *hairesis*, heresy - made possible by the existence of *competing possibilities*....It is defined as a system of euphemisms, of acceptable ways of thinking and speaking the natural and social world, which rejects heretical remarks as blasphemies.
- Pierre Bourdieu⁴⁶⁹

Doxa...can only be challenged at moments of crisis when objective conditions change abruptly and mental schemas lag behind, no longer mapping onto them. The taken-for-granted opinion breaks into orthodoxa, which must affirm its authority consciously and vigorously, without ever succeeding in ‘restoring the primal state of innocence of doxa,’ and heterodoxa, which openly disputes the validity of received tradition.
- Manuel Vásquez⁴⁷⁰

In the aftermath of the controversy regarding the inclusion of non-Indians on the walk, the orthodox position that it is a Christian pilgrimage and not an indigenous pilgrimage was tirelessly “preached” by the leaders of Felix’s group, especially in the presence of this non-O’odham ethnographer. After all, can white people not be Christians too? Care had to be taken when inquiring about the opposing position since discussion

⁴⁶⁸ Bernard L. Fontana, “American Indian Oral History: An Anthropologist’s Note,” *History and Theory* 8:3 (1969), 370.

⁴⁶⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Richard Nice, trans., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977 [1972]), 169.

⁴⁷⁰ Manuel A. Vásquez, *More than Belief: A Materialist Theory of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 247.

led only to sore feelings; the split was too close, personal, and recent to rehearse for an outsider.

Louis Lopez, one of the foremost leaders of Felix's group of "walkers," stated once that sometimes he asks himself, "Why do we do this?"

LL: Why are we so [pause] into doing this, when it's not our religion, it's not our tradition, it's not our *himdag*. This whole pilgrimage thing, this whole Catholicism: it's not our tradition, it's not our *himdag* as O'odham. Why have we adopted it so much that we *think* that, you know? We think, and some of our elders, you know, seem to think that this is our tradition. *And it's not*, you know! It's something that was introduced to us by the Spanish.⁴⁷¹

From Louis' historical perspective, which is in harmony with the findings of academically sanctioned literate history, he knows that all of the trappings of Christianity came to O'odham from the Spanish. Therefore, from this historical perspective, nothing Catholic can be properly classified as *himdag*. However, Louis also referred to some O'odham elders maintaining other positions. In response to inquiries regarding Catholicism and O'odham *himdag*, Louis offered a polemical story:

LL: I think it was at that time when these people who are not O'odham, wanted to walk the journey with us. They wanted to start out [from] *Cedagī Wahia* and walk the whole way to *Mali:na* with us. They approached Felix and asked him if they could do that. You know, they're not O'odham, but they wanted to walk with us.⁴⁷²

With the first non-O'odham wanting to join the walk to Magdalena, Felix's group of walkers soon fragmented, divided by the issue of whether non-O'odham should be included or excluded.

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LL: And at the time, a group [or rather, a part] of the group that was with us were opposed to that. And they said that they didn't want them to walk with us. And the question was "*Why?* Why don't you want them to walk with us?" And everything was, "Because they're not O'odham. Because they're not O'odham. This is *our* culture. This is our *himdag*. It's not theirs. They're not O'odham."⁴⁷³

To Louis as well as other O'odham, this position was comically absurd. Louis had been taught differently, so he did the best he could to correct the misguided notion that Catholicism could possibly be exclusively O'odham.

LL: And that's where I came in, you know, growing up in this [laughing] as a child and being explained Catholicism. This is what was brought to us. This is not our *himdag*. This is not our tradition. But we followed this and we grew up in this way. And growing up as a child, my immediate response to that was, "But this is *not* our tradition. But this is *not* our culture. Why are you saying that this is? This is something that was introduced to us by the Spanish: the Catholicism, which is what this walk represents. You know, we're walking, we're doing this journey and this walk in honor of Saint Francis, who is a Catholic saint. It doesn't have anything to do with tradition, with culture, with being an O'odham."⁴⁷⁴

When asked about how he thought the pilgrimage fit within O'odham *himdag*, Bernard Siqueros, the Education Curator of the Tohono O'odham Nation Cultural Center and Museum, began with a historical orientation similar to Louis Lopez's personal understanding of Christianity as a European import, though it was disrupted by recounting Felix's narrative of Christianity renewing basic O'odham values.

SS: How, in your view, does this pilgrimage to Magdalena fit with O'odham *himdag*?

BS: It's something that was introduced as a part of the Catholic faith. And of course, this wasn't a traditional pilgrimage. That wasn't a part of our traditional way of life prior to European contact. And when the Spanish came, they brought Christianity. And so in time a majority of our tribal

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members were baptized in the Catholic Church. And so we *adapted* many of these teachings from Christianity into our *himdag*, into our way of life. And so, I asked Felix one time about why we as O’odham so readily accepted this new way of viewing things. And [Felix] went [told] this long story about how *originally* before the Spanish came...⁴⁷⁵

Bernard trailed off, remembering the story:

BS: Of course we were a spiritual people, you know. We believed in the Creator, we believed in I’itoi and the teachings of I’itoi, and the teachings of *respect*, sharing, and hard work, and family, and all these things that are a part of our basic values. And so that when these people, you people [Europeans] *came*, he says that, “There came a time when people began not to live the way that we were taught. They began to move away from those values that were a part of O’odham.” And it was his feeling that it was the Creator, or Creator’s way of bringing these people here, with basically those same values, those same teachings in Christianity, and that we accepted them because we are sharing people, and [we have] respect for people. But that these Christian *values*, I guess, *fit right in* with O’odham values. So we accepted that.⁴⁷⁶

Rather than disrupting O’odham values, according to Felix’s narrative in Bernard’s memory, Christianity strengthened O’odham values and helped O’odham be more O’odham. Bernard continued, adding hesitantly:

BS: It kind of *rejuvenated* our basic value system, I guess. And so we, we *adapted*. Although we *held on* to our cultural values, our cultural views, we also brought in the Christian values that really kind of *fit* with the O’odham values. So we began to recognize the fact that we were O’odham. We have our culture, but that this way of thinking *fits* pretty well with our traditional beliefs, our traditional values. And so we accepted and began to do some of those things that showed our faith in Christianity. And so, this is how we did it.⁴⁷⁷

As Michel de Certeau, the erudite Jesuit scholar discussed in the introductory chapter and chapter one, stated, the strength of indigenous resilience “lay in procedures

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of ‘consumption.’”⁴⁷⁸ For Felix, as O’odham became more Christian, they became more O’odham.

Person, Place, and Pride

In chapter four of this work, Bahr is cited noting that Christianity provided O’odham with more socially sanctioned ways to show off.⁴⁷⁹ Recall that Camillus Lopez regarded the walk to Magdalena as “a health thing” for “exercise.”⁴⁸⁰ Clearly, walking to Magdalena strikes some O’odham as an ostentatious display of pride – a character flaw, or index of immaturity. But if pride is a sin, many O’odham are still proud to walk to their humble Saint Francis in service of this delicious vice.

Rather than demonizing pride as a cardinal sin, Bernard Siquieros valorized and attempted to capture, preserve, and promote the pride that he saw on the faces of the walkers that he met on their way to Magdalena when he began to photographically document the journey over a decade ago for the Tohono O’odham Nation Cultural Center and Museum.

BS: And so we stopped and we got down and started greeting people and asked if I could take pictures and they all agreed. So I took pictures and shook their hands and felt really [pause]. There was a sense of...of...of *pride* that I was feeling from the people that were there. That they were happy. They were resting. They were tired, but...⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁸ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Steven Rendall, trans., (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1984 [1980]), xiii.

⁴⁷⁹ Donald M. Bahr, “Santa Rosa, Arizona,” (1964), 46. Unpublished manuscript in possession of the author.

⁴⁸⁰ See the end of chapter four.

⁴⁸¹ bs_1.1

Bernard trailed off again as he remembered the scene, transported to the moment where the feeling that keeps him coming back to Magdalena first hit him:

BS: Someone had sore feet and I remember the Mexican Red Cross came and they were tending to some of people that had severe blisters and things. [Pause] *But the group was really very positive.* There is a very positive atmosphere, a very positive aura around each of these individuals that we met. And we encouraged them....And so we've tried to go back ever since. Every year since then [laughter] we've gone back to try to *show our support*, show respect for the people that chose to make the walk.⁴⁸²

In conversations with Bernard, pride pales in comparison to a lack-of-pride as a threat to contemporary O'odham lifeways. Rather, for Bernard, pride is a source of strength and its lack thereof a potential weakness and threat to contemporary O'odham.

SS: What would you say is the biggest problem to be overcome by O'odham today?

Taking in a long, deep breath before another long pause, Bernard was absorbed in thought.

BS: The biggest problem? There's quite a few that are up there. [Pause] *Not having a sense of connection with who we are*, I guess. Not having that strong sense of pride in who we are, I guess is something that I think needs to be worked on. As our Elders always told us, to have that sense of who you are...to be *grounded*, I guess. And to feel *good* about being who you are....I think, that's one of the things that I see is really important in our way of life is to *be grounded*, and *live* in a very modern life but [tapping the table] *be grounded* to who we are, to who we *really* are.⁴⁸³

For Bernard, the characteristic of being “*grounded*” connects pride, place, and mature, Real People. Certainly, Bernard was not the only consultant who spoke of “grounding” and the need “to be grounded.” Real People are *grounded*, emplaced, and well-traveled.

⁴⁸² bs_1.1

⁴⁸³ bs_1.1

BS: I think it [walking to Magdalena] helps those people that choose to have that be a part of their life. I think it really does *strengthen them* as individuals. And that's the one thing that I sensed *the first time I met up with the group* was that these people were very strong. Not only strong *physically* to make the trip [laughter], but strong *spiritually*. Strong individuals. You're just focusing in on that commitment that you made, whatever that commitment is, but you know that you've committed to make the pilgrimage, to make that journey. And so you're a *strong individual*. And I think they go through this. They come out with that sense of pride. "I did it!" And some of them keep coming back, keep coming back. Some people go for four years and say, "I've made my commitment. And I will keep on..." [They] just keep coming back because it's their road of life. It *strengthens* them. Yeah, it makes them stronger.⁴⁸⁴

As has been argued continuously throughout this study, O'dham are not merely born; they are made. For example, Louis Lopez explained how he told his daughter that his youngest grandchild needs to go to Magdalena in order to be a part of this journey. Louis shared that his family had been doing his grandson's "infancy rites," which included 1) the clay ceremony in which O'dham babies eat the earth, literally becoming *grounded*, 2) baptism in the Catholic Church, and 3) the Lopez family tradition of taking their babies to Magdalena.⁴⁸⁵ Clearly, for the Lopez family of Santa Rosa and Quijotoa, journeys to Magdalena are intimately related to the production of disciplined, mature persons who act and carry themselves as members of a family.

Although some O'dham might proudly call themselves "Catholic," or *ka:toliga*, as if it were synonymous with "good Catholic" or even "good O'dham," other O'dham seem to shy away from this self-designation, perhaps in order to sidestep criticism from

⁴⁸⁴ bs_1.1

⁴⁸⁵ lal_2.1

other O’odham who might see this label as immature, arrogant, or pretentious.⁴⁸⁶

Certainly, no O’odham would ever claim to be a “Saint,” at least not without joking. In fact, being called a “Saint,” or a *sa:nto*, is an expression of derision, as shown below in a conversation with Simon Lopez.⁴⁸⁷

SS: I’m thinking about the word, *Sa:nto*, in O’odham. I saw in the Saxton, Saxton, and Enos dictionary, that that word, “*Sa:nto*” refers to like a Saint, or those Saints, *Sasa:ntos*, but that it could also be used to refer to people [Catholics] who go into *Sasa:nto Ki*: [that is, a church, or “Saints’ House,” or “Where Saints Live”], that you can use that word to describe the people who are going to church. Is that right?⁴⁸⁸

Pointing to the Saints on the home altar next to us, Simon answered affirmatively.

SL: Um hum. Yeah. Yeah, it’s the same. It’s the same thing. *Sa:nto* is just like Fatima here. This is a *Sa:nto*. A *Sa:nto*. Sacred Heart is a *Sa:nto*. *Anything*, statute or picture, picture of Saint is a *Sa:nto*. We call it *Sa:nto*. And also, the *church*. They call it *Sa:nto Ki*:. That’s the house of the Saints. Saint Francis is a *Sa:nto*. And *anything* that’s a Saint is a *Sa:nto*. Which is the same thing as the church. The *Ki*: is the house of the Saints. And that’s why they call it *Sa:nto Ki*:. Or a place like Magdalena, they would say *Sa:nto Ki*:, because it’s the plan [home] of Saint Francis.⁴⁸⁹

So far, Simon confirmed that *Sa:nto* can refer to a Saint and that a *Sa:nto Ki*: is a saint’s house. But could *Santo* also be used to refer to an O’odham person who frequents a *Sa:nto Ki*:? Simon resumed his explanation.

SL: A lot of times these other denominations, you know, they’ll call *you* or *me*, you know, as “Catholics.” They’ll say, “Those *Sasa:nto*. Those are

⁴⁸⁶ For a similar example, see Jennifer Scheper Hughes, *Biography of a Mexican Crucifix: Lived Religion and Local Faith from the Conquest to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 176-178.

⁴⁸⁷ Prentina Stabolepszy also notes that those O’odham who go to Catholic chapels are called “*santos*” by those who do not. Prentina Kathleen Stabolepszy, *Laughing Softly: O’odham Song Ritual as Orientation to the World* (Boulder, Colo.: University of Colorado Department of Religious Studies M.A. Thesis, 1988), 59.

⁴⁸⁸ sl_3.2

⁴⁸⁹ sl_3.2

Sasa:nto Hemajkam.” *Sa:nto* people, Saint *people*, you know. And that’s what a lot of times a lot of people will say, you know, “Those are *Sasa:nto*, you know, *Sasa:nto Hemajkam.*” That means that *we’re Catholics*. And that’s why they put it like that, because they know that the Saints are our *Sasa:nto*.⁴⁹⁰

Essentially, Simon answered that yes, non-Catholics do call Catholics *Sasa:nto*.

With this affirmation, further inquiry was required in order to see if the appellation is used either humorously or derogatively.

SS: Is it humorous to say, for people who maybe don’t go to those churches, to call someone *Sasa:nto Hemajkam*? Is that like saying, “*Oh, these peoples, they think they’re Saints,*” or something?

SL: Sometime *before* there’s a lot of...*jealousy or something like that* with other denominations. That’s how it used to be here, here with the Presbyterians. We call them *Mi:mş*. *Mi:mş*. What they call the Presbyterians. And verse vice, *they* call us *Sasa:nto*. And *sometimes* there’s a little conflict in between, you know. I don’t know if [it’s] their *jealousness* or something like that. And like for instance, they’ll be calling *names*. And they’ll get mad and they’ll say, “*Those Sasa:nto* [Catholics]. *They think they’re Sasa:nto* [Saints]!” And verse vice, we’ll say, “*Oh, those Mi:mş* [Presbyterians, or Protestants more generally], you know. *They’re just Mi:mş* [ministers], you know,” and things like that.⁴⁹¹

If Presbyterians, or Protestants more generally, can call Catholics *Sasa:ntos*, because they think that they are saints, then Catholics can also retort that they are *Mi:mş*, or ministers, or that Protestants think that they are ministers.

When anthropologist Deborah Neff recorded the life history of Frances Manuel, at one point Neff might have jokingly suggested that Frances was something of a “saint” and that Frances’s life history might be read as something of a hagiography. In Neff’s chapter entitled, “I’m Not Really So Good!”, though, Frances states,

⁴⁹⁰ sl_3.2

⁴⁹¹ sl_3.2

I'm not all that good. If somebody reads this, they'll think, "Well, she's so good," but I'm *not*...I don't want anybody to say about *that*. I'm just a person, just a person. I'm not that special, I don't feel special.⁴⁹²

Like all O'odham, Frances Manuel is no "saint." Instead, Frances asks "[a]ren't we all a little bad?" and says that "we ourselves are devils," even implying that she is destined to become not a *sa:nto*, but a *jiawul* (or deceased devil cowboy) when she dies.⁴⁹³ Like a good cowgirl, Frances loved horses. She even dreamed about horses. Frances loved horses and in return she knew, her grandmother told her, "they [horses, or *jiawul*] want me....I can only go to this [mountain] when I die. I can't do anything else when I die. I could be a horse, I could be one of those ladies who shows horses, or a trick rider."⁴⁹⁴

Are devils and saints really so different? Today, *O'odham himdag*, or the O'odham way, encompasses both *sa:nto himdag* and *jiawul himdag*. Bahr might say that both ways are socially sanctioned modes for showing off. Is one disciplined, mature, sensuous, skillful, and yet modest way of walking and working and dwelling and moving through *ka:cim jewed*, "the staying earth," that different from the other? When *sa:nto himdag* and *jiawul himdag* are considered to be two viable, and non-mutually exclusive paths toward maturity, one can begin to see perhaps more similarities than differences between *jejawul* and *sasa:ntos*, or O'odham "devils" and "saints." In this way, O'odham are never far from *jejawul* and *sasa:ntos*, who continue to dwell within O'odham landscapes and interact in the daily lives of O'odham.

⁴⁹² Frances Manuel and Deborah Neff, *Desert Indian Woman: Stories and Dreams* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001), 165.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., 11, 88-89.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid., 11.

Perhaps *Ban*, or Coyote, can be more usefully juxtaposed to *jejawul* and *sasa:ntos* than they can be juxtaposed to one another. After all, *jejawul* and *sasa:ntos* are powerful beings who act in social and socially sanctioned ways, and therefore are models of appropriate behavior. Coyote, or *ban*, on the other hand, is a model of non-social behavior, deserving of a few good laughs, yes, but not emulation. Juan Dolores suggested that it is far more complimentary to be called *jiawul* than *ban*.⁴⁹⁵ Citing linguist Madeline Mathiot's *A Dictionary of Papago Usage*, ethnobiologist Gary Nabhan noted "a rich array of words to describe not-so-praiseworthy Coyote-like attributes in humans."⁴⁹⁶ As ethnobiologist Amadeo Rea explains, Coyote is "the archetype for several eminently human character traits; he is sometimes the braggart, the mischievous, the bumbling; he may be deceitful, a liar, lazy, or lecherous....Inevitably it is Coyote's actions that drive the story to completion."⁴⁹⁷ Like Frances Manuel, who says in her autobiography, "I'm not all that good" and "we ourselves are devils," Anna Moore Shaw shows her embarrassment at having taken "pages and pages" to tell her autobiography told in the style of a family saga. Shaw writes, "Perhaps the Pimas who read this book will say I am like Ban, the coyote – boastful and over-talkative about myself. No traditional Pima would ever talk long about himself for fear this charge would be thrown up to him."⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁵ Juan Dolores, "Papago Nicknames," *Essays in Anthropology in Honor of Alfred Louis Kroeber*, J. Alden Mason, ed., (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1936), 45.

⁴⁹⁶ Gary Paul Nabhan, *The Desert Smells Like Rain: A Naturalist in Papago Indian Country* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1982), 79.

⁴⁹⁷ Amadeo M. Rea, *Folk Mammology of the Northern Pimans* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1998), 195.

⁴⁹⁸ Anna Moore Shaw, *A Pima Past* (Tucson and London: The University of Arizona Press, 1994 [1974]), 169-170.

Ruth Underhill understood this ethical dimension of O'odham Coyote tales. She concluded that Coyote is:

the Papago's only substitute for the Devil. But Coyote is no devil. He is greedy, forgetful, tells fibs, and then tries to excuse himself just like a human. Of course he suffers for it, usually by getting killed. And a grandfather telling the story can make that horribly real, so that his hearers generally decide to mend their ways. Coyote does come to life again, Grandfather admits; but human sinners might not be so lucky. Efficient moral teaching, I decided.⁴⁹⁹

Underhill asserts that O'odham children are regarded by older O'odham as *O'odham*, or persons, in only the narrowest sense with the potential to ripen and become *O'odham* in the fullest sense of being Real People.⁵⁰⁰ According to Underhill, a common rebuke for wayward children was "We People do not do that," usually accompanied by the threat that they will be left to live with other lesser-persons or non-persons, such as "the Apache," or *o:b*, which is also a generic term for "enemy" in O'odham.⁵⁰¹ Moreover, Underhill's invocation of an O'odham conception of "sin" is also quite suggestive, particularly since Joseph, Spicer, and Chesky claim that "sin" is understood by Tohono O'odham as anti-social behavior against relatives.⁵⁰² In this regard, O'odham strive to be and become *O'odham*, or more like *jejawul* and *sasa:ntos* than like Coyote [*ban*], Apaches [*o:b*], or other lesser-, or non-persons.

⁴⁹⁹ Ruth M. Underhill, *Papago Woman* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1979 [1936]), 90.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid., 89-90; David Kozak's findings also support this determination. David Lee Kozak, *The Cult of the Dead: Neocolonialism, Violent Mortality, and Religious Change* (Tempe: Arizona State University Department of Anthropology Thesis, 1990), 167-168; David Lee Kozak, "Dying Badly: Violent Death and Religious Change among the Tohono O'odham," *Omega* 23:3 (1991), 214.

⁵⁰¹ Underhill, *Papago Woman*, 90.

⁵⁰² Alice Joseph, Rosamond B. Spicer, and Jane Chesky, *The Desert People: A Study of the Papago People* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974 [1949]), 92, n. 15.

Tohono O'odham History and the History of Christianity in the Americas

When the Spaniards and Father Kino first came to the O'odham in the seventeenth century, they planned to “convert” and “assimilate” O'odham in four stages over approximately ten years. In the first *mission* stage, they would establish churches. In the second stage, Spaniards expected either a *conversion* or a *reducción*, a reduction of their land base, or both. In the third stage, the *doctrina*, the O'odham would be given a religious education that would bring them within the fold of Catholic orthodoxy. In the final state, the *curato*, O'odham would become taxpayers with the same rights as other “citizens.” In the case of the O'odham, stages three and four have not yet been accomplished. O'odham in Mexico may have come closest to this fate, but in the United States, only at San Xavier (the only Tohono O'odham land to have been allotted) have the third and fourth stages even been attempted. Bernard Fontana suggests that only the first stage and the second stage of *conversion* have been accomplished among most Tohono O'odham in what is today the United States.⁵⁰³

In McNally's words, this colonial strategy of conversion and assimilation is “what *missionaries intended*,” not “what *native people made of Christianity*.”⁵⁰⁴ Since the Tohono O'odham largely Christianized themselves in the second half of the nineteenth century, building their own churches to house their *sasa:ntos*, if such a conversion did occur it was not one that Spaniards would have pictured. Instead, like most social programs, the Spanish plan to convert and assimilate Tohono O'odham failed on its own

⁵⁰³ Bernard L. Fontana, *Of Earth & Little Rain: The Papago Indians* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989 [1981]), 55-57, 77-79.

⁵⁰⁴ Michael McNally, *Ojibwe Singers: Hymns, Grief, and a Native Culture in Motion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 9; emphasis in original.

terms because it lacked the support of local communities. When Tohono O’odham community leaders took up the project of Christianizing themselves for their own reasons and in their own ways, the results differed tremendously. As Thomas Sheridan explains this legacy, “Kino and his colleagues had their own agendas” when they rode into Tohono O’odham territory; however, “their goals fell victim to chance, circumstance, and the agendas of the Pimans themselves.”⁵⁰⁵ Sheridan’s conclusion likewise follows William King whose study of Tohono O’odham Catholicism in Tucson, Arizona, found that Tohono O’odham have historically been reluctant “to accept change if they are not themselves [the] masters of its extent and direction.”⁵⁰⁶

As O’odham continue to live, move, and dwell within their traditional landscapes, they are actively engaged in shaping their futures in the present as well as vitally connected to the past, just as those who have gone before are said to be participating in the present moment. Simon Lopez explained that the candle came with Christianity, and therefore that those who died before the coming of Christianity don’t necessarily know what candles are. Simon told of two contrasting perspectives on candles at the Children’s Shrine, a particularly special place which has to be remodeled every so many years near Santa Rosa, where children from long ago were said to have been sacrificed, or sent into the earth, in order to stop a great flood.

SL: When we remodel it...they used to tell ‘em, “You don’t have to burn candles over there, because those children that’s there, they don’t know, because they’re Hohokam. And *long time before*, before Christianity

⁵⁰⁵ Thomas Sheridan, “Kino’s Unforeseen Legacy: The Material Consequences of Missionization among the Northern Piman Indians of Arizona and Sonora,” *The Smoke Signal* 49-50 (1988), 155-167.

⁵⁰⁶ William S. King, *The Folk Catholicism of the Tucson Papagos* (Tucson: University of Arizona Department of Anthropology Thesis, 1954), 114.

comes in, *they don't know*, the kids don't know *over there*.
But...now...they say, these *older* people, “*You can still do it, because they probably realize by now too*, how we realized how important the Catholicism is, like *Saints* and where the Saints came from, and the candle burning, and things like that. So, but now *they* still do this: *They* burn candles over there at the Children's Shrine.

Chapter one argued that O'odham have embedded, or emplaced, Christianity into their ancestral and conceptual landscapes. Though this claim might seem bold, it hardly seems so when some O'odham themselves claim that even the Hohokam, who have come and gone long before them, appreciate the significance of Christianity in the present. In short, the O'odham have embedded Christianity into the landscape because at least some O'odham claim that the Hohokam, “those who have gone before,” have embedded Christianity into the landscape.

When Tohono O'odham Christianized themselves and their lands on their own terms and of their own volition, they O'odham-ized Christianity in two related senses. First they made Christianity into something that was deeply meaningful and made sense to O'odham. In the second sense, Tohono O'odham personalized, socialized, or O'odham-ized Christianity by establishing enduring relationships with powerful Christian persons. Tohono O'odham neither “converted” to, nor “resisted,” the Christianity of Europeans; rather, they embraced the powerful persons of Christianity (even devils!) within an O'odham cosmology. The result is not a “syncretic” or “hybrid” “religion,” but a unified, though not monolithic Christianity that is a “way of life” (*himdag*) that continues to be meaningful to many Tohono O'odham today. Indeed, *O'odham himdag* continues to shape contemporary O'odham as many O'odham continue to learn how “to be a good walker” (*himdag*) from Saint Francis, or as Felix once put it, “We learn how to

be *O’odham* from *San Flansi:sko*.” The annual pilgrimage to *Mali:na* renews the ancestral relationship between O’odham and Saint Francis, making journeys and places as these journeys and places make mature O’odham, providing a path for O’odham to become Real People.

When Louis Lopez was asked what Felix might have meant when he said “We learn how to be O’odham from *San Flansi:sko*,” he explained the following:

LL: I think one of the other things that as O’odham we’ve really adopted to [is] trying to understand what Saint Francis was about. But it’s through the [oral] teachings of those that have talked about what Saint Francis is about. And if you think about what Saint Francis represents, and what he’s the patron saint of, is *animals* and *nature*. And as O’odham that’s what we considered ourselves. We are a people of the earth.⁵⁰⁷

As “people of the earth,” O’odham understand Saint Francis talking with animals and other entities because their own oral traditions – including the whole of the *ho’ok a:ga*, or “Witch Telling,” – tell of a previous era in which O’odham and animals spoke the same language and could communicate with one another. Even today, O’odham are connected to the earth not only through stories that tell them that they emerged from it, but also through walking to Magdalena, and eating the earth.

LL: The ceremony that we do, the clay ceremony with the babies. That clay represents our connection to the *earth*. And when you make that connection to the earth, everything on the earth is all in that way related to you. You’re supposed to respect everything on the earth, you know, the animals, the trees, and everything that grows and survives off of the earth is all in that way related to you.⁵⁰⁸

According to Bahr, “clay eating,” or “clay drinking,” is a ceremony in which a medicine person gives a cup containing a gruel of white clay, owl feathers, and water to

⁵⁰⁷ lal_1.2

⁵⁰⁸ lal_1.2

an infant or a girl at their first menstruation. Bahr regards this “swallowing/drinking of something gritty, chalky, and grey” to be an imitation, or transformation, of the Christian eucharist, which incidentally has historically been hard to come by as a result of their largely “priestless” Catholicism.⁵⁰⁹ Bahr also calls this a “Native ‘baptism,’” a “girls’ puberty sacrament,” and a “purification.” Although this study did not include discussions of this matter in depth with O’odham consultants, Bahr contends that his O’odham informants claim both babies and pubescent girls smell badly to deceased O’odham who remain sentient beings who are said to be present in the present. In turn, deceased O’odham are often said to take the form of owls, hence the use of owl feathers in this context. According to Bahr, both infants and pubescent girls smell “raw,” an olfactory trait shared with “fresh bloody meat, menstruating women, and birth; and owls (ghosts) hate it.”⁵¹⁰ Joseph Giff, the Akimel O’odham singer from St. John’s Village who previously spoke of O’odham bodies “flowering” in chapter one, simply remarked of the puberty ceremony as, “they say that they ‘roast’ [*cu:wa’am*] her.”⁵¹¹ Similarly, Underhill – cited in chapter one speaking of O’odham “ripening” – noted that the O’odham words, “*tcuuwa*, to reach puberty, and *tcuuwam*, girl at puberty, come from the same root as *tcuwa*, to bake.”⁵¹² On the basis of these statements, one might say that O’odham are not

⁵⁰⁹ Bahr also says that this is “one sacrament,” with “two occasions,” which he claims “play on or respond to the Christian rights of baptism and, surprisingly, communion.” Donald M. Bahr, “La Longue Conversion des Pimas-Papagos,” *Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec* 21:4 (1991), 15.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹¹ Joseph Giff, “Pima Blue Swallow Songs of Gratitude,” Donald M. Bahr, trans., *Speaking, Singing and Teaching: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Language Variation – Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Southwestern Areal Language and Linguistics Workshop*, Florence Barkin and Elizabeth Brandt, eds., (Tempe: Arizona State University Anthropological Research Papers No. 20, 1980), 132.

⁵¹² Ruth M. Underhill, *Social Organization of the Papago Indians* (New York: AMS Press, 1969 [1939]), 165.

merely born as “persons” – they are born “raw,” after all – but are rather “baked” or “roasted.” Since O’odham personhood is gradually produced – or “roasted” – O’odham are made, rather than born. By extension of this, one might say that O’odham are born “raw,” and need to be “cooked” (though not in the sense of Claude Lévi-Strauss’s work).⁵¹³

This is true in multiple senses, it seems. For example, in various versions of an episode from the creation story, Coyote and others create O’odham. In some tellings, white people are undercooked, black people are overcooked, or “burned,” and O’odham are just right. There is an olfactory dimension to this as well, since most burned things stink, particularly human flesh. Simon Lopez also related another creation story – both fascinating and uncomfortable for the ethnographer – about how I’itoi killed the eagle, which explains the origins of different peoples.⁵¹⁴ The eagle had been catching O’odham for many years, eating only small parts of them, and then stacking their corpses high in his cave. After killing the eagle, I’itoi brought the decaying O’odham corpses back to life. According to Simon, “the ones that were just killed,” or at the top of the heap – or even the cream of the crop – so to speak “came back as O’odham.” Midway down the heap were “the *old* ones, the *rotten* ones,” who were too white and spoke an incomprehensible language. Then, there were “the *real, real rotten ones*...was just *black*...and *smell*.” Simon explained that both white and black people require cologne, or lotion, in order “to get away with *that smell that they have...because they’re rotten*

⁵¹³ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969 [1964]).

⁵¹⁴ sl_3.1

people.” Unlike these “rotten” people, speaking of O’odham, Simon said, “*we don’t have to have any cologne or anything like that.* And we don’t smell.” Unlike these overpoweringly stinky bodies that rotted for too long, O’odham, of course, are just right with their often referred to so-called “O’odham perfume” and “O’odham deodorant.”

However, according to Bahr’s interpretation of clay eating, O’odham do not always smell great, at least not to deceased and ancestral O’odham. Giff’s comments on “roasting” O’odham, and Underhill’s comments on “baking” O’odham support the interpretation that O’odham need to be “made,” and that there is an olfactory dimension to this as well. For example, as previously noted in this chapter, babies in the Lopez family require not one, but three, infancy rites: baptism, going to Magdalena, and clay eating. Near the end of the last recorded discussion, Louis Lopez insisted that his baby grandson needed to go to Magdalena.

LL: I was telling my daughter, you know, “We need to take *the baby* and to have it be a part of this [pilgrimage].” Now that he’s doing most of his infancy rites that need to be done. The clay ceremony, he needs to be baptized, and, a big part of our family tradition of carrying this on is going to *Mali:na*. And I told her, “I want him to be a part of that. I want him to experience that from *here*, from here on.”⁵¹⁵

Since the Lopez family had already done the clay ceremony and baptism ceremony for Louis’s grandson, the final remaining infancy rite was to take his grandson to Magdalena in order to greet Saint Francis. In Louis Lopez’s explanation of what Felix might have meant when he said “We learn how to be O’odham from *San Flansi:sko*,” Louis went on to say that the connection with the earth, which the clay ceremony firmly establishes through O’odham eating dirt, is what Saint Francis is all about. Looking straight ahead,

⁵¹⁵ laI_2.1

Louis seemed to imagine far back the very historical moment in which the O’odham were first introduced to Saint Francis, apprehending him as one of them.

LL: And that was what Saint Francis’s big thing was about, that you *respect*, you know, not only people, but the animals because they’re a part of you. Saint Francis was the patron saint of *animals*, *all animals*, you know, and that included nature itself. And so, you know, when those teachings were brought to us O’odham, I think that was our big connection to that. That’s what we’re supposed to be taught as O’odham, that you’re a part of nature, you’re a part of this earth. And so everything that is a part of this earth is all in that way related. And it was kind of like, “Well, that’s who we are as O’odham anyway!”⁵¹⁶

In highlighting how O’odham senses of their own history diverge from academic models of Tohono O’odham history and the history of Christianity in the Americas, this dissertation finds that O’odham strength and perseverance are grounded in O’odham patterns of consumption which have not only made Christianity their own for many O’odham, but have also mutually produced O’odham places and persons that are connected not only by travel across O’odham homelands and walking to Magdalena, but also by eating the earth. Having themselves emerged from the earth, eaten the earth, and moved across the earth, the O’odham are profoundly people of the earth who have made Christianity their own by embedding Christianity within their ancestral landscapes through songs, staffs, and stories.

⁵¹⁶ laI_1.2

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